

DEFENCE CUTS CAMPAIGN STARTS INSIDE

# MILITARY ILLUSTRATED

January 1998 Number 116



**ENOUGH IS ENOUGH**

Are we to go into the  
21st Century unprepared?

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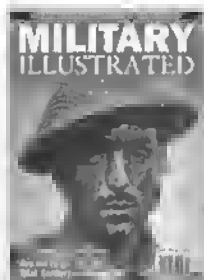
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# Military Illustrated

Past & Present



**British soldier captured by Germans at Dunkirk, 1940.**  
Photograph published in *Signal* German propaganda magazine. (Peter Newark's Military Pictures)

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# Readers' Letters

MI readers are invited to write to the Editor. Letters should be addressed to: Tim Newark, Military Illustrated, 43 Museum Street, London WC1A 1LY

## French Reality

I was interested and amused to read David Seymour's review of *Redcoats along the Hudson* in *Military Illustrated* 113 in that it managed, in a few sentences, to encapsulate the whole range of Victorian myths about the French and Indian War; 'shadowy' Robert Rogers, the evil French outside Fort William Henry, and so on. This is after all, what people who are drawn to the period generally want to read and therefore market forces ensure that that's what they usually get, but it must be said that this viewpoint is well beyond its sell-by date, originating from at least the early 19th century.

Unpleasant a reality thing it is, is the fact that the French and Canadians were terribly outnumbered through the 18th century and there never was any doubt that the Anglo-American onslaught would prevail in America. It never was part of French policy to colonise it. What the French Canadians did however was an incredible achievement of tactical supremacy in the face of overwhelming odds. As Christopher Duffy says in his *Military Experience in the Age of Reason*: 'the rising heroes of North America were the French Canadians, who although more outnumbered in the order of twenty to one by the English colonies and yet contrived to maintain the balance for so long through their mobility and skills with woodcraft and weapons'.

If anyone deserves the mantle of the shadowy irregular hero it should be one of the Canadian partisans. Colony officers like Langr, de Langlade, St Luc de la Corne, or Marin who warrant it, but they, unlike Rogers, weren't self-publicists with a willing public eager for an entertaining rewrite. They tended to fall with New France. Few tall tales issued forth from these the real shadows of the war. All is not lost. A new breed of historians are seeking the truth behind the myth in books like the recent *Battle of the Snowshoes* by Bob Bearor, and *La Marine by Gallip and Shaffer*. In the UK in our own small and enjoyable way we, as Living Historians, recreate and celebrate the heroes of Canada in '*Les Troupes de Marin 1757*', part of *New France & Old England*, the Society of the French and Indian War. If anyone reading this is interested in participating as a Milleien or Compagnies franches de la Marine, please write to the following address: Ralph Murchard, 54 Lower Whitelands, Radsmeck, Bath BA3 3JP.

## Authentic Hair — 12th Foot circa 1759

In response to Vincent Keohne's criticism of my 'modern' hairstyle in November's edition of MI (following publication of 12th Foot grenadier feature in MI 111). What a pity Mr Keohne didn't do a little more research himself before putting pen to paper. I was certainly inspired by Murier's paintings and

it is plain to see that many of his grenadiers have braided hair and side curls. However, my campaign-ready impression is nearly a decade later — at the height of the Seven Years War — and

incorporates a freshly-cropped lock. Similar functional haircuts are depicted in the paintings of Edward Penny and we have evidence of Lord Howe inducing the army to cut their hair short 'leaving it not more than two fingers' breadth long'. Mr Keohne's crusade of futile correctness may be better directed towards 18th Century Redcoats with facial hair!

David Whitehouse, Bilston

## Prussian Irish

I was interested in the letter from Mr O'Rielly of Dublin in your latest issue, concerning a possible Irish element in the army of Frederick the Great. There was indeed a regiment composed largely of Irishmen in the service of 'Old Fritz'. It was not a freikorps or a group of irregulars, it was Infantry Regiment no.19, the entailed proprietor of which was the Markgraf Karl of Brandenburg-Schwedt. It was one of the best regiments in Frederick's army.

I quote from the *Army of Frederick the Great* by Christopher Duffy, the first edition published in 1974: 'The Margrave Karl mol over all the Irish troops who were captured with the Saxons at Pirna. To begin with they were most unwilling to serve among the Prussians, but the decent treatment they received from the Margrave won them over so completely that they were in despair if they were ordered to serve in any other regiment'.

IR 19 is best known for his heroic conduct at Hochkirk where the second battalion of the regiment under Major Simon von Langen was wiped out in the defence of the churchyard. I have a fair sized collection of illustrations of Frederick's soldiers in action by Adolph Menzel and other artists, but I have never seen any paintings which depict the stand by Major von Langen and his men in the churchyard at Hochkirk. Can any of your readers suggest any sources of such material?

Your fine magazine contains something of interest each month. I greatly enjoyed the article on the recreation of a British infantryman for the battle of Minden — for many years I wore a rose in my hat on 'Minden Day'. Perhaps we can have some articles on the Army of Frederick the Great when space permits.

M Waters, Wellingborough



1997 Re-enactor Awards at the National Army Museum: Editor Tim Newark with winning members of (left to right): 47th Regiment of Foot, Great War Society, WWII Living History Group, and the American Civil War Society.

# Enough is Enough

Soldiers travelling by public transport? Demoting the Territorial Army to a Leisure Brigade? The Paras and Marines to be merged? King's Troop and Household Cavalry to be disbanded? Money shifted from Britain's Defence to an already bloated Health Service? What on earth is going on?

Since the end of the Cold War, it has become politically fashionable to cut great chunks out of our defence expenditure. Both political parties have encouraged this and the result is a constantly shrinking armed services. Under New Labour this process is set to increase in pace with Gordon Brown happy to fund expenditure elsewhere by raiding the defence budget. Tony Blair may turn his back on Britain's traditions, but it is our successful and proud military heritage that has enabled us to maintain democracy in this country through two world wars. Who will he turn to in the next international crisis? I wouldn't fancy our chances with marketing men and spin-doctors in the frontline.

The world is now returning to a period of instability similar to the 19th century, when powers vied to claim their role in international affairs. How would Britain and her allies deal with a united Islamic

superpower in north Africa? What about a nuclear armed Germany? How far will China go in its Pacific power play? Some of us may like to ignore these future points of conflict, but unless we prepare for war, we will not secure peace. We must pay for advanced research into a missile defence for Britain. We must maintain a significant land force capability and that includes keeping our soldiers' morale high with a greater respect for their traditions.

Over the next few months, *Military Illustrated* will be interviewing several key figures, both military men and politicians, about the role of our armed forces in the 21st century. Above all, however, *Military Illustrated* wants to hear from you, our readers. Do you believe Enough is Enough? We want to hear your views and if we receive enough letters — long or short — we will copy these and send them to George Robertson, the Defence Secretary, and he will know exactly how we feel about any further defence cuts. Bothered us with your views.

All letters should be addressed to: Enough is Enough, *Military Illustrated*, c/o *Military Illustrated*, London SW1 1JH. A selection of these letters will be published.

## Prussian sword

I am in possession of a Pattern 1811 Prussian cavalry sword made by Schimmelbusch & Joest in Sölingen. This pattern is a copy of the British light cavalry sword pattern 1796 which was imported into Prussia as from 1807 and recorded later in the Prussian army 'AKO' as Pattern 1811 cavalry sword. Following information I have read, 6000 British swords made in Birmingham were received in Colberg in May 1807 and another shipment of 10,000 swords was received in 1813. The company 'Schimmelbusch & Joest' worked in Sölingen from 1800 to ca. 1840.

Unfortunately, there is no date stamped on my sword, so I would be grateful if you, or *MI* readers, could answer the following question: is there any evidence that Pattern 1811 cavalry swords made in Sölingen were issued to the Prussian cavalry during the last campaigns of the Napoleonic wars (1813-1815) or were they only imported British swords used? The markings on my sword are:

On the back of the blade: *F.A.* (illegible) *von Schimmelbusch & Joest in Sölingen*.

On the hanger: 2F (this could be as well a marking for a later re-issue of this sword). AS.

Thank you for any information on this subject. I also take this opportunity to thank John Morgan from Newnham for the detailed information given, through *MI* readers letters, in pat. 1885 cavalry swords. *Jean Binck, Belgium*

## Competition Criticism

Regarding your October issue of *Military Illustrated* I would like to comment on the 'Winners and Losers' article for the Re-enactor of the Year Competition. I've always considered the competition to be a very valuable exercise both to the societies involved and for readers interested in the Re-enactment field. Any comments, even negative ones, must be very useful in the

running of a Re-enactment Society as outsiders give a new viewpoint with observations society members may have overlooked. The public make some useful observations in society members at their events but the judges of the competition obviously give a better informed and expert opinion (with their experience of Re-enactment) and as such provide some very useful input towards future displays. However, I do believe this year's competition wasn't up to your usual high standard.

Obviously no group will ever be perfect and the Re-enactor of the Year Competition gives them a chance to evaluate their year's performances and, perhaps, to consider changing some aspects of their portrayals. However, some of the judges' comments were of a rather non-specific nature and such generalisations don't really help towards evaluating a society's performance. I consider this the main benefit of the competition with prizes and prestige being of only secondary importance. After all, don't we all wish to see better Re-enactments?

I appreciate that the allocation of space in your magazine must be difficult and that certain priorities must be born in mind but this competition did have quite a 'build up' over the previous months and I think it deserved a little more coverage. I think some more in-depth criticism would have been appreciated. Regardless of whether a group wins or loses, constructive criticism of their events would be highly beneficial to the future planning of their performances and to be honest this wasn't forthcoming in this year's competition.

Another observation I made of this article was that the 'modern' societies (nineteenth century onwards) seemed to get far more attention both in text and photographs. Although I realise that the two world wars and Napoleonic are very

popular, this did appear a little biased. I noticed that the same criticism regarding dramatisation was applied in both a medieval and a world war two group with different results i.e. dramatisation was considered a positive point for one and a negative point for the other. Perhaps separate categories for Modern societies and Ancient/Medieval societies may be in order. There is quite a gulf between the Roman Legions and World War Two German Infantry which must make judging very difficult. For example while the majority of World War One and Two kit can still be bought from Military Surplus and other sources the costume and weapons (etc) of previous eras has to be almost entirely manufactured by the participants themselves. It can't be easy to make a fair comparison in cases like this. Similarly, Ancient/Medieval societies usually specialise in hand to hand fighting techniques whereas the more modern societies are gunpowder reliant, as would be expected from the eras they represent. In the fighting categories can a fair comparison be made between such different groups?

To conclude, I do think that this competition is a very good idea and if used correctly could help improve the standards of British Re-enactment, but this year's coverage did seem a little unbalanced. I hope next year's competition will be a little fairer with a more even distribution of column space to the participants and further detail in regard to criticism. After all, a society cannot improve its act if your comments are ambiguous, but if constructive remarks are made the competition could have the effect of improving the hobby of Re-enactment for both participants and spectators which would certainly justify an extra page or two next year I hope.

*David Buttery, Leicester*  
[this letter has been edited]

# Books

**Barbarian Warriors: Saxon, Viking, Norman** by Dan & Susanna Shadrake, 144 pages, Biblio, Index, Dark Age directory, over 150 colour and h/w photos, numerous illustrations; Brassey's HB £18.95

*Barbarian Warriors*, another title in Brassey's *History of Uniforms* series, is a determined examination of the military wear of warriors in Britain during what is commonly referred to as the Dark Ages (4th-6th century AD). The core of the book is based on the work, interpretations and findings of 'Britannia' — a Dark Ages re-enactment group in which both authors are active. In undertaking this study they are the first to point out that some of what is presented owes as much to educated speculation as archaeological evidence. Even where archaeological or literary sources are available, the findings are often a matter of surmise (who is to say if the 'iron marks on the dying Picts', referred to by a Roman poet in 400 AD, were tattoos or a reference to wounds inflicted by iron swords?)

The book includes a useful explanation of the principle differences in weapons and their usage between modern re-enactors and the genuine warrior from the past. The theatrical requirements of a modern show are often at odds with accurate re-enactment of period battle. For displays, Britannia adopt a certain uniformity of appearance. While they acknowledge the diversity of the late Roman Army from which the Dark Age warrior was to emerge, a more standardised 'look' helps the audience to distinguish between

the sides during the display. Swords tend to play a more prominent role than they did in reality (allowing for better theatre, rather than better battle). At the same time the deadly 'gaesum' spear, with its broad, barbed head, is missing from the arsenal of the re-enactment warrior for the very reason it featured in that of his ancient counterpart — effective killing power.

A wealth of interesting photographs and illustrations accompany the informative text of *Barbarian Warriors*. Although the heavy reliance on re-enactment interpretations (particularly where scant evidence exists) may not sit well with the purist, it is refreshing to encounter authors willing to risk censure by going out on a limb with their theories. For those interested in this period (and there is more to be said about it than one might suppose) the result of all this painstaking research, practical trial and error application and intelligent guesswork is a highly commendable work shedding very welcome light on a dark age.

Ken Gurst

**The 1917 Spring Offensives — Arras, Vimy, Le Chemin Des Dames** by Yves Buffetaut; 192 pp., 300 photographs; ISBN 290818267X; £19.95

This new publication from H&C covers the spring offensives of 1917 in some 200 pages and over 300 photographs, the majority of which have not previously been published. As with earlier H&C publications this latest book is a very pictorial work, relying mainly on short but sufficiently detailed picture captions to tell the story of the campaigns and the historical background.

Following a strategic withdrawal by the German forces in February of 1917, confidence in the ability of the allied armies, to push the

## Book of the Month

**Soviet Casualties and Combat Losses in the 20th Century** edited by Colonel-General G F Krivosheev; Greenhill Books; 290 pp, numerous charts and tables; ISBN 1853672807; £21.95

The Soviet Union has loomed throughout the 20th century as a military superpower, emerging with its empire in tact after a civil war, grinding down the Nazi monolith, and engaging in numerous imperial wars of influence, including its very own 'Vietnam' in Afghanistan, the straw that finally broke its back. And yet, we have known so very little about its experience of war and how it actually performed in battle and at what human cost. At last, in this book, translated from Russian documents hitherto top secret, we have a detailed picture of the casualties suffered by Soviet forces from the Civil War through World War Two to Afghanistan and with this in hand, only now can military historians in the West make their comments on the successes and failures of this military machine. And what a cost it has been — from 1918 to 1989, it is estimated there have been some 39,641,479 Soviet casualties, of which just under 10 million have been killed. The tables recording losses in battles in World War Two make chilling reading, with thousands of men being lost every day. Without doubt this is a major work and both professional and armchair historians can now start to appreciate the impact of war on the Russian psyche and how this may well effect future strategic decisions.

David Seymour

## SOVIET CASUALTIES AND COMBAT LOSSES IN THE TWENTIETH CENTURY

Edited by  
Colonel-General G.F. Krivosheev

Foreword by  
Professor John Erickson



Sad farewell to John Pimlott, Head of Military Studies at Sandhurst, and much enjoyed reviewer of books for MI, who died in October. Rest in peace.

# Faces Behind the Books

*Military Illustrated* interviews some of the leading publishers and editors of military history books. This month, we talk to Jamie Wilson, head of Spellmount Publishers.

**How did you get started in military publishing?**

I was with Hodder & Stoughton for 28 years finishing as Group Production Director. On Hodders' acquisition by headline, I was made redundant. A few months later in November 1993 I purchased Spellmount Limited.

**Which is the military book you are most proud of publishing?**

*The Irish Guards in the Great War* by Rudyard Kipling.

**Which are your favourite military books of all time?**

The Pan Series — *Enemy Coast Ahead* by Guy Gibson, *The Cullitz Story* by P. R. Reid, *Cockshell Heroes* by C. E. Lucas Phillips, *The White Rabbit* by Bruce Marshall.

**What are your major interests outside**

**of military publishing?**

Skiing, golf, Special Constabulary, France.

**Which books are you looking forward to publishing over the next year?**

*The Peninsular War, Aspects of the Struggle for the Iberian Peninsula* edited by Ian Fletcher, *The Blood*

*Tub — Gaugh and the Battle of Bullecourt 1917* by Jonathan Walker, *Hannibal*

*Crosses the Alps: The Enigma Re-examined* by John Prevas.



Germans back even further, was high. The 'Big Push' started on the 9th of April, but despite initial successes by British, Canadian and Australian units the advance became bogged down before the French were able to start their offensive on the 16th of April. Despite great sacrifices the French failed to achieve their objectives, the huge losses resulting in many French units choosing to mummy rather than be thrown back into the murderous assault on the German lines.

Despite being the product of both a French author and publisher the book gives due credit to all of the allies, whilst at the same time not being scared to acknowledge any shortcomings amongst their own forces. The French are not slow to recognise the contribution made by the British and Commonwealth forces, a point some British authors might like to bear in mind.

Martin Brayley

**Epic Actions of the First World War** by R. W. Gould MBE; Tom Donovan; pp. 192, illustrated, ISBN 1 871085 39 X. £25.00.

The Canon Woodville lookalike painting on the dust-jacket, which depicts a stern-looking Tommy in an appropriately heroic pose, gives

a clear indication of the content of the book, the very title of which echoes Great War period works such as *Deeds that Thrilled the Empire*. This book is the latest in a long line of works to celebrate British military prowess in this fashion; a line that goes back at least to the late Victorian period, if not earlier. The earlier, amateurish period of the war seems to hold the most interest for the author. Of the 28 actions discussed, 17 were fought during the first two years of the war, while Passchendaele and Cambrai get only one entry each. Arras and the Hundred Days of 1918 receive only passing mentions.

However, this is not a bad book. It consists of a series of straightforward, 'no frills' accounts of unit level actions (all British, except for two Australian and one Canadian). Mr. Gould writes well, and includes some interesting background information on units and individuals involved. The chapters are descriptive rather than analytical.

I can't help thinking that the author has missed out on an important potential market: a book like this would be invaluable for battlefield tours. The small scale (by Great War standards) of the actions lend themselves admirably to study on the ground; this reviewer can particularly recommend the 1914 actions at Etreux and Le Cateau, included in

this book. Unfortunately, the book falls down on the question of maps. Not every account is accompanied by a map, and those that are included vary greatly in quality, from those drawn by professional cartographers, taken from the official history, to crude sketches that are virtually unusable. For all that *Epic Actions* is a 'good read', although not as useful as it might have been.

G D Shuffield

**Napoleon's Army 1807-1814** by Guy C. Dempsey Jnr.; Cassell; 256 pp., 162 colour illustrations; appendices; ISBN 1854093479; £25.00.

Following in the footsteps of the excellent *Napoleon's Soldiers* in the 1809 Otto Manuscript, this is an equally superb book based on the beautiful Napoleonic prints of Aaron Martinet. Little understood and frequently undervalued, Guy Dempsey has pulled them all together to make an impressive case for their importance and usefulness in understanding Napoleonic uniforms. A well-sourced introduction puts the prints in context and there is a lengthy caption for each of the 162 colour images. First class and congratulations to Cassell for such a fundamental source book!

David Seymour

**Test the War Weapons** by Timothy J. Mullin; Paladin Press; 432 pp., numerous b/w photographs; ISBN 087364935; \$40.00.

This is a fascinating and useful book of interest to readers beyond the guns and shooting audience. The author has test fired over 150 of the world's leading rifles and light machine guns of the 20th century, from the Mauser Carbine used by the Boers at the beginning of the century to the ubiquitous AR-47 to the latest Heckler & Kochs. His comments are illuminating and give a real sense of military history at first hand, comparing British and Boer weapons of the Boer War, or the ferocious Browning heavy machine gun. Of the latter the author says: 'I have seen cars catch fire that had no gas in the tanks. The incendiary matter (in the Browning bullets) will ignite the seat material or wiring harness. Soon the entire car is a mass of flames.' That gives an idea of the vividness of the author's observations. Also, test firing is expensive. About the Browning: 'After about 250,000 rounds, the rivets will get loose... (but) 250,000 rounds will cost \$150,000 at a minimum if you buy ammunition at the cheapest possible level — so you get the idea.' Yes, we do!

David Seymour

**Hermes of World War II** by Ruthin Cross; Greenhill Books; 112 pp., numerous b/w and colour photographs and maps; index; ISBN 185367298X; £15.99.

This book focuses on extreme acts of courage on both sides of the war, including the Chindits, SAS, the Marines, and German paratroopers. First hand accounts by veterans involved gives a tremendous vigour to this action-packed accounts. More of an entertainment than serious military history, the book makes a great gift.

*Martin Windrow*

**The Cathars and the Albigensian Crusade** by Michael Costen; Manchester University Press; 229 pp., 26 b/w; index and bibliography; ISBN 0719043328; £14.99.

In 1209, Pope Innocent III declared a crusade, not against the Turks or the Arabs, but against his fellow Europeans — the Cathars of southern France. Renowned for the ferocity of the fighting and treatment of the Cathars, the story of the Albigensian Crusade needs a strong stomach. In the first encounter of the crusade, the camp followers of the crusader army were so hungry for loot and plunder that they attacked the town of Beziers with picks and shovels before their men soldiers had even considered how it should be attacked. The soldiers followed behind the camp followers and some 10,000 citizens, men, women, and children were massacred, and the town burnt to the ground, when the soldiers confiscated the loot of their camp followers. Eventually the heretics were extinguished, but only after much hard fighting and the intervention of Simon de Montfort. This study covers the whole crusade, as well as explaining the beliefs held by the heretics.

*Tim Newark*

**Occupation** by Ian Oushy; John Murray; 348 pp., 16 h/w; bibliography and index; ISBN 0719556708; £25.00.

Many myths have grown up about the French under Nazi occupation, not least that the

Resistance was a powerful force against the Germans. This book reveals the reality, in which it was at least 14 months after defeat that the first German soldier was killed by the resistance. Initially, the French hoped as a nation to live as an equal state within the German Reich and, according to Pierre Laval, 'ally ourselves with Germany and to confront England together.' This important book gives a true insight into life under occupation and shows how it was only when it looked as though Germany might lose the war that resistance grew, although even then it was not the mighty liberation de Gaulle later glorified.

*Tim Newark*

**The Western Front Illustrated 1914-1918** by John Laffin, Strand, Sutton Publishing, 1997, paperback, pp 170, many illustrations, some colour, £12.99.

It is often forgotten that the First World War was illustrated by drawings and paintings as well as photographs. Today, some photographic images of the war are extremely well known, through being used in books and television programmes. Examining the artistic impressions in *The Western Front Illustrated*, it is not surprising that few are used by modern authors, for while they have a certain period charm, they look rather naive and dated. In this book John Laffin has assembled a fascinating selection of these illustrations, some in colour, by British and French artists. The accompanying text is very useful, covering the ordinary life of the soldier, including topics as diverse as raids, wounds and latrines. Some of his more sweeping judgements on the conduct of the war are contentious, to put it no more strongly; but Laffin's strong suit is his feel for the nuts and bolts of trench life and his empathy with the ordinary Tommy and Poilu. First published in 1991, this is a welcome reprint in paperback; one for the beginner rather than the specialist, but none the worse for that.

*G D Sheffield*

**Ladies from Hell, Instrument of War Part One**; Westminster King Productions; 52 minutes VHS video; £13.99.

The population is divided between those who love the bagpipes and those who don't and I would wager that this is something to do with whether one possesses Celtic or Saxon ancestry. Personally, I do, and always get misty-eyed when I hear the pipes in a war movie, so this video is an absolute treat for me and those who share this passion. Telling the history of the pipes from the Middle Ages through the 18th century campaigns up to World War One. It includes the testament of piper veterans, such as the one who led a suicidal charge against German machine guns until he reached the enemy trenches. What more would you want? Great stuff; Part Two covers more recent conflicts. Thoroughly recommended.

*Tim Newark*

**Osprey Men-at-Arms**; each 48 pages, 8 colour plates. Approx 40 mono illustrations; p/bk, £7.99.

(307) **Late Imperial Chinese Armies 1520-1840**, Chris Peers, plates by Christa Huik.

This title marks the fifth and final part of a series spanning Chinese history from c200BC until the mid-19th century, for which Mr Peers and Osprey are to be congratulated; it is hard to think of any other publisher who would make available such a mass of illustrated information on a subject of such specialised interest. This title covers the late Ming, Shun and Ching periods, of particular interest in that they coincide with early European contacts and the widespread use of firearms. The text is full of detail; the miniatures are a good mixture of artefact photos and manuscript illustrations; and Christa Huik's plates are clean and detailed.

(309) **The Italian Invasion of Abyssinia 1935-36**, David Nicolle, plates by Raffaele Ruggeri.

A first rate example of what Osprey can do best — a concise but detailed account of a subject

difficult to research from English language sources, full of specifics and excitingly illustrated. The text provides a clear introduction, a chronological account of the main events, and a detailed examination of both armies. The photographs, most of which will be quite new to non-Italian readers, are excellent; the plates are attractively presented, and in some cases dramatically colourful. As with their recent titles on the Russian and Chinese civil wars, Osprey deserve every encouragement in their efforts to 'fill in' the too often neglected period between the World Wars.

(310) **German Medieval Armies 1000-1300**, Chris Gravett, plates by Graham Turner.

A long awaited 'prequel' to the same author's MAA 166, this title covers the complex but formative period following the Carolingian empire — the years of the early Holy Roman Empire, of the Hohenstaufens, Guelphs and Ghibellines, of campaigns in the east, west and south. The straightforwardly organised text is illustrated largely with contemporary manuscript images; and the plates, by an artist new to the series, offer attractive subjects characterised by the strong, simple heraldry of this early period.

(311) **The German Army 1939-45 (1): Blitzkrieg**, Nigel Thomas, plates by Stephen Andrew.

Over the years the series has included a number of titles on specialist branches of the forces of the Third Reich; it is logical that Osprey should wish to insert the 'spine' of a straightforward series of studies of German Army uniform. While there is hardly a shortage of reference books on the subject, this is an inexpensive, concise introduction. The text lists regulation orders of dress, backed by comprehensive tables of ranks, insignia and other distinctions. The photos are mostly familiar, but do their job — as do Mr Andrew's cleanly drawn plates, which understandably contain few surprises but which offer clear reference information.

*Martin Windrow*



# Fast Knights

Greed as a motive for military action became prominent in the Seven Years War, but could also lead to gross miscalculations. ROBERT NOTT talks to IAIN DICKIE, editor of *Miniature Wargames*, about his fascination for this period.

Iain Dickie is almost certainly the lynch-pin of the wargaming hobby. As the editor of *Miniature Wargames*, the hobby's most widely read journal, his influence in the field is unparalleled, although he freely admits that the hobby of wargaming is not that easily defined and to a large extent resists organisation; 'the games process makes you an individual with your own ideas, and you tend to conduct your own research because you want your "boys" to win — it's not that it's chaotic it's that it's

got a lot of very single-minded, I was going to say self-opinionated and I don't mean in a derogatory sense, strong-willed people who want to do their own thing. It's not a difficult situation to live with but it is a difficult one to dominate. I don't think any one individual or organisation could dominate because it's so diverse and people are so determined — they will do what they want to do — that's one of its strengths but it's also in some respects a weakness'.

Despite what he may have said to the contrary, Iain was born in 1950. 'I've been telling people I'm thirty-six now for I don't know how many years but I was born in 1950 — but I don't feel like it!' After leaving school, Iain went to college and studied engineering, but admits that after an all boys school the presence of girls at college caused him to take twice the usual time to finish the course. He took a job with the electricity board and then moved out of engineering to sales, which he stayed in for the next 11 years finally working for a hairdressing company. After a year Iain realised that hairdressing sales weren't for him, 'I couldn't get on with the product — the hairdressers weren't a problem, I just didn't relate to shampoo!' Iain

then changed direction and moved to Bournemouth running his house as a Boarding House. 'That was a fund of stories in itself' Iain then took a job as editor of *Army and Navy Modelworld* in February 1986 and about a year later also took over as editor of *Miniature Wargames*.

In 1991, the success of *Miniature Wargames* prompted Iain to buy the magazine lock, stock and barrel and he sees a bright future for the magazine and the hobby. 'I'm happy doing it, we've got lots of extra projects on the go and keeping the thing ticking on and interesting to everybody is a very satisfying job.' Since then Iain has most notably appeared as advisor to Angela Rippon on the Channel Four production *Game of War*, and provided the initial impetus for the series. 'An ideas man came to me from Channel 4 and asked if wargaming on television could be made to work to which I said yes because I actually had a clear idea of how I would like to do it. I picked three battles which they agreed to — based on the original idea of using footage from the feature films *Cromwell*, *The Charge of the Light Brigade* and *Waterloo* which gave us *Balaclava* with the Thin Red Line and the

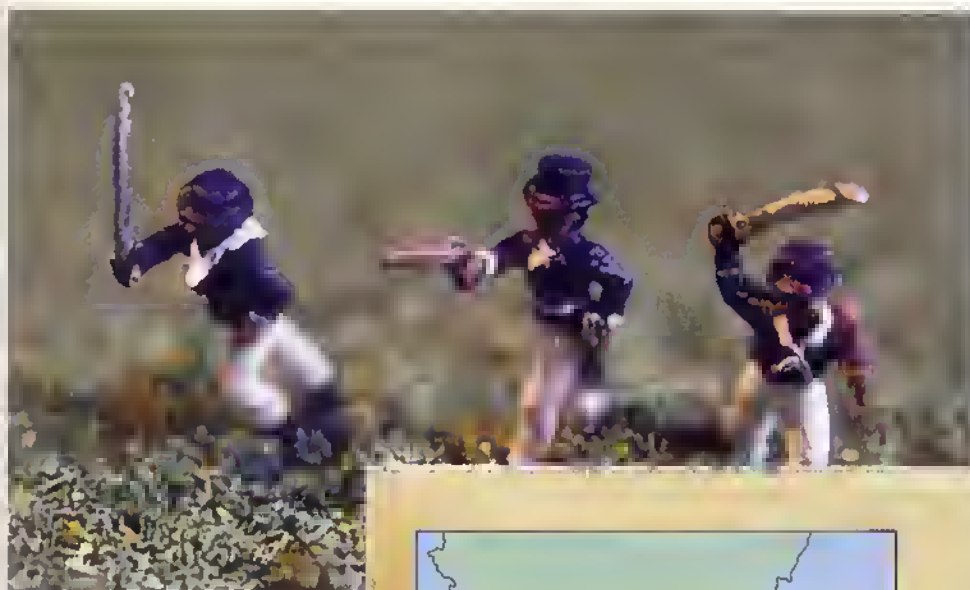


Above: The might of the Royal Navy in the eighteenth century is best represented by the one hundred and thirty ships-of-the-line that she possessed. Here the 90 gun *Barfleur* and 74 gun *Thunderer* close in on a doomed Spanish vessel. With the ships of the East India Company added to those of the Royal Navy, Britain's naval mastery was complete.

*Charge of the Light Brigade*, *Naseby* because it's English Civil War and I felt it had to be represented and *Waterloo* because it's probably the most famous battle ever. Television isn't aimed just at one group of people, you've got to try and appeal to a broader interest and I think it was a brave attempt and I salute Channel 4 for having the courage to put the money up'.

Iain first came across wargaming at the age of thirteen. 'I have an elder brother who used to build 1/35th scale kits and the only way I could compete with him, because brothers always compete and we still do, was by building the small Airfix ones which had lots and lots of figures. One day the toy shop in the village where I lived had this display of American Civil War troops having a real





Left: A British landing party of sailors embark on an aggressive search for spoils. The arrival of Royal Navy or East India Company vessels usually signalled a violent loss of wealth and possessions for whoever was unfortunate to be their target. The acquisition of booty and prize money was the only way a seaman could gain wealth and prosperity, something the East India Company learnt quickly. Short of being fortunate enough to be part of a crew capturing a treasure ship the extortion of money from foreign inhabitants was the easiest way to grow rich. Unfortunately greed overtook sense where Manila was concerned.

Right: Manila represented the most valuable prize in Spain's East Indies colonial possessions. With the overwhelming power of the Royal Navy and the addition of East India Company ships and men, even such distant prizes were within reach. Unfortunately General Dwyer and Admiral Cornish lacked the necessary expertise in diplomacy and ultimately the expedition reaped no reward.

ding-dong around a train with a cow-catcher on it'. After talking with the shop owner, Iain was persuaded to buy *Soldier, Soldier* by Donald Featherstone. 'I was totally captivated by it, so I bought all these Airfix figures and was blowing them all up and got my younger brother to join in.' Iain's next discovery was the Society of Ancients and he went to his first meeting at the Temperance Hall in Southampton in 1969. The subject that really appealed to Iain turned out to be close to his study of engineering — Artillery — and in particular artillery of the ancient period. 'There was a book on the family bookshelves, *Everyday life in Roman Britain*, which had pictures of Roman artillery being fired by their crew — so I got one of those and was firing fire-cones around the back garden and then I discovered the tabletop game idea and that sort of took over. I've always been very keen on artillery. I remember when the local club got started we had a campaign so I went away and painted up I think ten 25mm Hinchcliffe Roman Ballistae and I remember painting these up for a big game and I'd been using spray varnish and just happened to pick up this can thinking that it was spray varnish and sprayed these figures ready for the big game tomorrow, only the can had white paint in it! I'm not the sort of person who

gets speechless but I had to walk out of the house — my wife couldn't understand why I'd gone this strange colour and was totally unable to put two words together! Iain has always come back to the Ancient period, but has frequently changed interest to other periods, notably the Seven Years War which has become a fascinating area of interest for him.

#### The Seven Years War

The Seven Years War from 1756 to 1763 is perhaps one of the most unknown of the major conflicts of the last few hundred years, always seeming to be overshadowed by the

Napoleonic period. This is unfortunate as the Seven Years War has more claim than any other in being the first true 'World War'. Not only did the war involve Britain, France, Prussia, Russia, Austria, Sweden, a host of smaller states, and latterly Spain but it was fought on three continents and is notable in that Britain and France attached far more importance to their colonial possessions than either did during the First World War. When one considers that the conflict involved colonies as far apart as Havana, Manila, Gibraltar, Canada, the Americas and India there can be no doubt as to the global nature of the war. It can be rather neatly separated





**Left: Iain Dickie, Editor of *Miniature Wargames Magazine*. To Iain, the *Seven Years War* represents both the most successful period of British Imperial conquest coupled to the most profit driven desire for personal wealth by those involved. It was this greed that led to operations such as the attack on the Spanish colony of Manila and which led to the mismanagement of negotiations.**

some forty-five were in a fair condition and the battleworthiness of the Spain fleet can be seriously questioned. In qualitative terms the difference was even more pronounced and would become more so as the conflict progressed. By a systematic close blockade of French ports, such as Toulon and Brest, the French fleet was deprived of sea experience and both ships and crew

in two distinct conflicts with the minimum of overlap; the continental campaigns in central Europe between Frederick the Great's Prussia and the combined forces of France, Russia and Austria, and the maritime war carried out between Britain and France (and eventually Spain) over the farthest reaches of the globe.

The war began officially when Britain declared war on France on 17th May 1756, followed three days later by one of the most ignominious defeats for the Royal Navy, when Admiral Byng was defeated by Calissoniere off Minorca, leading to the fall of the island and the recall, court-martial and summary execution of the unfortunate Byng. On the continent, France instead of concentrating on the war at sea began a conflict with Prussia after becoming embroiled in the machinations of the Empress of Austria over taking Silesia away from the Protestant Frederick the Great. England, far from becoming embroiled in the war in Europe, concentrated on the war at sea with her only concession being the financial support given to Frederick.

The superiority of the British navy is easy to see in quantitative terms — in 1756 England possessed one hundred and thirty ships-of-the-line to France's sixty-three and Spain's forty-six. Of the French ships only

deteriorated. By contrast the constant action of the British ships, far from generating fatigue, honed their officers and crew into an ever more efficient fighting force. The British naval strategy can be seen as a fourfold plan; a close blockade of the French Atlantic ports, attacks on Atlantic and Channel coasts by 'flying squadrons' and small bodies of troops, blockade of the French Toulon fleet and lastly distant foreign expeditions against French colonies in the West Indies, Africa, and the East Indies. By 1758 French desperation forced them into preparing an invasion flotilla, but Admiral Hawke caught up with Conflans' Brest fleet and annihilated it on November 20th 1759 thus putting an end to all French hopes of invasion. With the loss of all French possessions in Canada to the English and the fall of Pondicherry in January 1761, signalling the end of France's power in India, France drew Spain into the war in the vain hope that the Spanish navy could revive France's fortunes. For Iain the results of the Seven Years War in terms of Britain's gains has never since been equalled, 'in the Seven Years War we gained so much — we kicked the French out of India and out of North America — all the wars since have not given us such gains. And we had the potential to kick the Spanish out of their colonies as well which led to the attack on Manila.'

## The Company and Cash

The Seven Years war began with the Kingdom of Great Britain and ended with the British Empire. The basis of this transformation was naval power, no more correctly maritime power, for it was by trade and mercantile prowess, backed up by naval superiority that Britain achieved her elevated position. A key part of that strength lay in the so-called 'Chartered Companies' that had been created in the late sixteenth century to boost trade, in particular the Honourable East India Company. For Iain, 'one of the things that captures my imagination about the Seven Years War is the Honourable East India Company which started out as a trading company and ended up having to guard its own warehouses and then went on to having a whole army and effectively ruling a continent — all from the point of view of "let's make a profit this year guys!" The key link is the relationship between the profiteering exploits of the Company, the colonial goals of Britain and the military strategy of the Royal Navy. By 1761 Iain sees the drive for profit as having become the dominant factor, 'The Seven Years War was drawing to a close, the British had effectively mopped up most of the French colonies and there is a theory, though I suspect it's an excuse, that we thought the Spanish were going to declare war on the Brits so we thought we'd get in first and declare war on the Spanish.' This drive for conquest was based almost entirely on the desire for plunder and was heavily influenced by the political weight of the East India Company. 'What it demonstrates to me is the attitude of elements of the British Court and Government to the whole enterprise. It was done because, "well we've got the French colonies what else can we get before we get to a treaty and we have to give it back!"'

## Siege of Manila

The Spanish colonies of Havana in the West Indies and Manila in the Far East represented not just an annoyance to the self-styled supremacy of Britain's naval and mercantile fleets but a significant prize in terms of monetary value and strategic importance. Havana, as well as being a rich city, was also the port that commanded the only passage which was available to ships sailing from the Gulf of Mexico to Europe laden with treasure. With Havana lost, Spanish treasure ships would be forced to assemble at Cartagena and beat against the trade winds, a hazardous journey not least because it dramatically increased the journey time in which the Spanish vessels could be hunted out by the prize hungry Royal Navy. 'There were two main actions, for the siege of Havana we co-ordinated troop movements from North America, from Europe and ships of the Company fleet as well as Royal Navy ships and so



on'. The resultant action was an unqualified success, when Admiral Pocock laid siege to Mora castle at Havana and after forty days took possession of the surrendered city. Besides the city itself, the Spaniards lost over three million pounds in various monies and goods which belonged to the Spanish crown, along with twelve ships-of-the-line, although the value of the latter was somewhat dubious.

The adventure against Manila represented a similar purpose, namely the paralysation of Spanish trade at her other great mercantile centre, this time in the Far East. Unfortunately the operation came to resemble not an attack against trade but a blatant opportunistic scramble for personal profit. The plan originated with one Colonel Draper. 'This officer had been badgering the King that this was a good idea and was made into a General for the duration of the mission only'. Opposition to the expedition came from such notables as Newcastle who saw the whole fabric of British naval operations unravelling: 'A most expensive, hazardous expedition to the Havana when both ships and men are wanted elsewhere. A wild goose chase afterwards to Mexico, St Augustine and God knows what! And the whimsical plan of expeditions going on further than ever. Portugal is also to be defended at a vast expense. God knows from whence or how!' Nevertheless a force was put together under the joint command of General Draper and Admiral Sir Samuel Cornish and sailed in August of 1762. For Iain the force that set sail is a representation of the profiteering rather than the strategic aims of the operation. 'He'd got one Royal Regiment, which he discovered was grossly understrength, but he persuaded, with the King's blessing, the directors of the Company in India to add its ships and men, many of which were sinking — they were so rotten they were absolutely on their last legs — on the way there are great arguments between the army officers and the Navy as to the divisions of spoils before they even get there, as there was Prize Money established in the Navy but not in the army!'

After reaching Malacca, where they were resupplied by the neutral and envious Dutch, the force arrived at Manila. 'They get the troops ashore, they lay out the batteries — the

Spanish are so caught by surprise that their one bastion has so much artillery in it that they can't fire it — they can't move their guns to fire them because they are all in one bastion — it's a ludicrous situation! The siege is over quickly and the Brits get in'. The next stage in the operation resulted in the most farcical event of the British expedition. 'The Spanish surrender and the Spanish Governor, who's actually an acting Governor, who by tradition was the local Archbishop, negotiates with the Brits. The Brits are eyeing everything up with a view to how much plunder they can get. They conduct the negotiations and they agree with this Archbishop that they will draw up an inventory of all the things that they could take away as spoils of war and he will give them effectively an IOU to be drawn on the crown of Spain. They also capture a treasure ship, on its way back from further east so there's potentially enormous sums here and they sail away with their IOU from an Archbishop. At the end of the war it gets presented to the crown of Spain and they say "it's nothing to do with us you'll have to ask the Archbishop!" We tried to rip them off and they did it to us — I think that's brilliant!' This misjudgement can be understood to some extent for the capitulation of Manila took place on October 6th, before the Treaty of Paris on the 10th February the following year, the distances and communication time being so great that as there was no knowledge of events in the east no provision was made in

the treaty for Manila and so any ransom bills presented to Spain could be legitimately and legally ignored. This does, however, reflect badly on the commanders of the British force as they made no provision for this, such was the overwhelming desire to extract as much wealth from quite probably their last operation of the war. 'It wasn't a disaster, the military affairs were well managed with the resources available and I think the individual working officers deserve credit for that but this mismanagement was at the negotiation level where they were hoodwinked by this Archbishop.'

The operation against Manila illustrates the greed and the misjudgement that comes with it although Iain is careful to place to motives in their historical context. 'In those days it was almost their only chance to make a fortune for yourself, I suppose you could do it in trade but it would never be quite the same as winning it in war — I find that striking but I don't disapprove of it as we all have to make a living in the time that we live in' •

**Below:** By the time they arrived, soldiers' uniforms would have suffered greatly. The splendid uniforms that were in widespread use throughout the period were difficult to maintain and would not have travelled well, especially during the long, uncomfortable and often storm-ridden voyages to the east. For these Grenadiers the prospect of fighting in tropical humid conditions wearing their richly decorative uniforms must have been a daunting one.



# Casualty

Far from being quacks and con-men, military surgeons of the 17th century were highly trained professionals who served both sides in any war. PHILIPP J. C. ELLIOT-WRIGHT talks to the leading re-enactor of military medicine.

Without doubt, whether ancient Roman, medieval, seventeenth century or Victorian, recreating the detail and reality of past medical practice is one of the most demanding in re-enactment, requiring both significant investment in equipment and time. The popularity of medical dramas on television often reflects a morbid curiosity with medical matters. In certain respects much the same attraction draws large crowds to the varied medical re-creations that now enrich living history.

In a previous article I related the enormous effort and attention to detail required to recreate a surgeon of the American Civil War. To purchase and accurately display the instruments and techniques of the mid-nineteenth century demands considerable funds to purchase original pieces and a dedication to reading. Fortunately though, original nineteenth century tools are at least still available to purchase and display. However, if recreating a Victorian surgeon is demanding, reproducing the tools of a surgeon of earlier eras requires primary research and skilled craftsmanship, the few surviving original artefacts being museum pieces which are valued at auction in the region of thousands of pounds. One of the very few to make this commitment is Ralph Needham whose character of a seventeenth century barber surgeon, Master Obadiah Ringwood, is now able to convey to an audience through his unparalleled set of reproduced medical tools an insight into that period's surgery.

Ralph himself is almost a living history artefact having originally joined the Sealed Knot just after its creation in 1970. A varied road saw him depart the SK in 1972 for the Roundhead Association and then a complete departure from the hobby during the 1970s and 1980s. When the bng returned in 1991 he rejoined the SK and found the intervening years had been unkind and combat a touch straining on the limbs. Consequently it was suggested he might be interested in the somewhat more sedate living history role of a seventeenth century surgeon. Being unemployed at that moment the time consuming nature of the challenge was

welcome and Ralph, with some help from fellow re-enactors, was soon busy in research and reconstruction. Taking the name of Master Obadiah Ringwood, Ralph soon found his display was in demand and he was soon adding new characters and periods to his repertoire. Today Ralph makes his living from this, offering clients at schools, hospitals and numerous public events over a dozen characters and roles to choose from, ranging from a thirteenth century physician to a WWII Home Guard Sergeant.

Without doubt, however, it is Obadiah who is the most popular, this barber surgeon being on call over thirty times this year alone. In portraying the character Ralph's main objective is to educate, and in particular to dispel some of the slurs and myths about surgeons in the past. Far from being the clumsy brachets of stereotype, barber surgeons were as close to qualified professionals as possible in the seventeenth century. Dating back to the eleventh and twelfth century, barber surgeons came of age when Pope Alexander the Third decreed at the Council of Tours that it was forbidden for clergy to shed blood. As many clergy were already performing minor surgery, they turned to the barbers who were already a common sight at monasteries cutting monks' hair so as not to deny this service to their clients. As they worked with their hands they were regarded as tradesmen, and as was the practice of the medieval world, very soon these barber surgeons formed guilds to regulate their craft. Several centuries later, in 1540, Henry VIII was willing to incorporate the Barber Surgeons Company of London by an Act of Parliament whose first Master was Thomas Vierey, Chief Surgeon to the King. Under Vierey came the Guilds Wardens who set up headquarters at the Barber-Surgeons Hall in the City.

As the surgeon worked with his hands, he was inferior in status to the Physician and doctor who diagnosed with their minds (they had the College of Physicians). However, to qualify as a surgeon was no minor undertaking. To just gain an apprenticeship to a reputable surgeon required a contemporary grammar school education and

a 'smattering' of Latin. There followed a minimum of seven years as his Master's indentured apprentice, at the completion of which came an examination at the Barber-Surgeons Hall. Having qualified, the young surgeon was only granted a limited licence to practice, it being several more years and the reading every six months of a thesis in front of the Company, before he became a Master of Anatomy and Surgery. Only this Masters Degree carried a permanent licence to practice. Even then surgeons were required to attend official lectures and dissections at the Barber-Surgeons Hall to update their knowledge and skills. And that knowledge should not be dismissed. Whilst now knowing why, through observation and rational deduction surgeons knew that if instruments were clean there were 'less accidents', that is, deaths. Equally, it was required that all re-used bandages be thoroughly washed.

Taking the above into account, the myth of the ill-educated charlatan who could set up business anywhere is just that, an ill-informed myth. The fact is that to establish a practice in a town — required membership of one of the surgeon's guilds and if the surgeon did not demonstrate his professional competence there was soon very few clients. The same was true for the army — in the 1650s general Monk refused to accept a Mister Fish as a surgeon as he had only served a few years as an assistant and had no qualifications. It is this professionalism that Ralph attempts to convey in his portrayal of Obadiah Ringwood. Ralph steers clear of any attempt to carry out fake operations, particularly as even just his talks see the occasional member of the public fainting (five this year) although he does occasionally perform such before an invited medical audience. Instead he explains the daily life and skills required by a seventeenth century surgeon, using his unparalleled collection of reproduced tools and instruments to illustrate the latter. The instruments form the centrepiece of his talks and have taken over six years to assemble. Undertaking researches at auctions of original instruments, antique fairs, as well as many visits to museums, with



the help of a skilled craftsman the full range of implements have been hand crafted. Ralph though fully accepts that, whilst accurate, there is still room for improvement as he discovers new facts every day.

In relating the life of a barber surgeon Ralph attempts to ensure that their contemporary morality is included. They were essentially religious men whose mission was to preserve the living image of the Lord and to serve the sick. Ralph stresses that their moral code required they serve all and thus in the English Civil War army surgeons attended to both sides. Thus if captured, it was accepted by Royalist and Parliamentarian alike that surgeons were freed forthwith. Further, their creed of service to all was respected; after the First Battle of Newbury, although Charles I made it clear he considered captured Parliamentarians as traitors, he equally ensured the Royalist surgeons treated their wounds on an equal footing. For Parliament, Lucy Hutchinson helped Nottingham Castle's parliamentary surgeon dress the wounds of Royalist prisoners, against the opposition of Captain reverend Lawrence Palmer, the God fearing, bible-thumping rector of Gedling.

To set against Ralph's serious character of Obadiah Ringwood is his somewhat more tongue in cheek portrayal of a thirteenth century medical physician 'Sir Ralph of Epperstone' (a village near Nottingham). Whilst this portrayal is more of an entertainment, the information and spirit is firmly based in fact. The reason for this alternative approach is simply that to attempt to give a serious tone to a physician of 1210 as he relates his cures is soon lost in the mirth of the modern audience, for example, demonstrating how to cure a headache with Pleintian Root (a common garden weed) tied to the head with a red ribbon (a magic colour), or how to cure cataracts with dried fox's tongues in a red bag tied around the patient's neck. However, what is conveyed is the importance of the Crusades to the evolution of western medicine, given just how far ahead of medieval Europe were the Arabs. Certainly Sir Ralph of Epperstone acknowledges his debt and thus provides a suitable introduction to his seventeenth century colleague, Obadiah.

As Ralph Needham stresses, whilst recreating the medical world of the past is both fascinating and rewarding, it requires



**Above and right:**  
Master Obadiah  
Ringwood's 17th  
century tools of the  
medical trade.

almost as much book study and outlay on instruments as was required of the originals. It is a testament to Ralph's efforts that modern surgeons often form the most attentive of Ralph's audience and as previously mentioned, he is often invited to hospitals to convey the world of the seventeenth century barber surgeon. Here surgeons and theatre staff often comment how the designs of many instruments have not changed through the centuries, many of Ralph's tools being readily identified. Having said this, modern instruments are certainly all custom made for the operating theatre, whilst in the seventeenth century a good friend of any naval surgeon was the ship's carpenter with

whom he could exchange saws and chisels. However, for anyone interested in discovery what was in store for patients in past centuries, Ralph makes regular appearances for English Heritage●



# Germany's Blitzkrieg Army

The German blitzkrieg of 1940 left the western powers reeling and confirmed the legend of German military invincibility. But the soldiers that led this lightning campaign possessed many of the qualities of the previous world war and horses played their part as much as motorised vehicles. In an extract from the first volume of a major new work analysing *The German Army 1939-45* (Osprey £7.99), NIGEL THOMAS reveals the elements that contributed to this remarkable campaign.

On Friday 10 May 1940, at 05.35 hours, the German Army launched three Army Groups, comprising 91 divisions, in a massive offensive against the Low Countries and France - 'The Western Campaign'. Within 47 days they had smashed 8 Dutch and 22 Belgian divisions, forced 14 British divisions in retreat back across the English Channel, leaving 92 demoralised French, emigré Czech and Polish divisions to sign a humiliating Armistice on 22 June which came into force at 12.35am on Tuesday 25 June. The campaign sent shock-waves across the world, prompting Joseph Kennedy, the United States Ambassador in London (and father of John F. Kennedy) to warn President Roosevelt a successful German invasion of Great Britain was imminent, a pessimistic prediction shared by a significant proportion of the British population.

It was widely believed outside Germany that such a decisive victory over the British and French Armies, successors in the troops who had resisted Germany's attack in August 1914, could only have been achieved by an ultra-modern army employing revolutionary

tactics. The truth, however, was far more prosaic. The German Army was a force rooted in traditional methods, which in 1933 had begun a ten-year plan to transform itself. The outbreak of war on 1 September 1939 had arrested this development mid-way, leaving an Army with one foot in the past and another in the future. There were four main reasons for the German victory in the West - superior strategy and tactics, military organisation, and training, and corresponding deficiencies on the Allied side.

## Blitzkrieg strategy

The German High Command employed a strategy which came to be described as *Blitzkrieg* ('lightning war'), a word which, although obviously German, had been coined abroad - Hitler himself attributed it to the Italians. The Germans instead used the expression 'Armoured Concept', whereby a concentration of *Panzer* divisions, supported by motorised infantry and *Luftwaffe* medium- and dive-bombers, punched a hole in the enemy line, broke through the resulting gap, and penetrated rapidly into rear areas to

descried the opposing command and control structure, preventing demoralised enemy troops from regrouping for a counter-attack. Line infantry, following on from, would then occupy the newly seized territory, break local pockets of resistance and round up stragglers.

The rapid surrender of the Dutch, Belgian and French governments, and the apparently placid adjustment of their populations to German occupation, seemed to vindicate the *Blitzkrieg* strategy. But Germany lacked the necessary means to employ this revolutionary concept in its purest form. The modern highly mobile armoured, motorised and air forces had to rely on a primitive logistical 'tail' with horses and wagons operating from distant railheads and line infantry marching an average of 15 miles per day, a pace that hadn't increased since 1914.

This exposed two major deficiencies which only became apparent later. Firstly, the rapidly advancing *Panzer* divisions soon outran their logistical tail and the following infantry, leaving themselves isolated deep in enemy territory, exposed to counter-attack by a determined enemy, a risk which compelled a cautious Army High Command to order a halt to the rapid armoured advance on 23 May, allowing Franco-British forces to escape from the Dunkirk beaches and continue the war. Secondly, the slowness of the advancing infantry allowed large numbers of enemy soldiers to evade capture and regroup in remote areas as guerrillas. The demoralisation of the defeated armies avoided this in 1940, but it did happen in Yugoslavia and Greece in April-May 1941 after a campaign which was otherwise completely successful, and later in 1941 during the attack on the Soviet Union.

*Blitzkrieg* was the brainchild of military strategists such as *General der Panzertruppen* Heinz Guderian. He and the Army Group commanders, *Generaloberst* Gerd von

Rundstedt, *Fedor von Bock* and *Wilhelm Ritter von Leeb* had all experienced and learned from Germany's defeat in the First World War. However its execution was now left in the hands of such professionals, Adolf Hitler, a gifted politician



Left: Belgian frontier, May 1940. An *Oberstleutnant* of *Panzer* troops in the M1935 black tank-crew uniform with M1940 officers' field-cap, wearing the 1914 Iron Cross 2nd Class ribbon with 1939 bar in his button-hole, talks to a colleague, who is wearing the M1935 officers' peaked-cap with *Panzer* pink *Waffenfarbe* (branch-colour facing-cloth) piping. (Josef Charita)



with a limited grasp of military strategy, had from February 1938 begun exercising supreme field command as Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces (*Wehrmacht*), a situation that deteriorated further in December 1941 when he also assumed the post of the Army Commander-in-Chief, a man in which Germany would eventually be fighting for its very existence was being conducted by a man who gave political identity a priority over military realities, and did not possess the pragmatic insight to achieve complete victory or to avoid inevitable defeat.

#### German divisional organisation

Germany's military success was based on the Division as the tactical 'building-block', the smallest unit containing all the different sub-units required for independent action in battle. All the components of a Division were recruited from the same Military District (*Wehrkreis*). This made it an efficient military unit, with troops from different branches - infantry, armour, support units and services - training and fighting together. But it was also an important social unit, since troops and their replacements were recruited from the same region of Germany, sharing local loyalties and customs, and, after recovery from wounds could expect to return in the same division, their 'military home'. Thus the narrow focus on the regiment or battalion, which had been destroyed in the German Army by the repeated military reorganisations following the First World War, and which still persist in the British Army, were replaced by a social loyalty in the same unit which required military cohesion on the battlefield.

The success of *Blitzkrieg* relied on the imaginative deployment of the *Panzer*, infantry and motorised divisions which formed the bulk of Germany's striking force in the Western Campaign. The first three armoured (*Panzer*) divisions were formed in October 1935 and by January 1940 there were ten, numbered 1-10. The 1939 organisation prescribed 14,373 men. There was a *Panzer* Brigade, comprising four 1,700-man regiments, each with two 660-man battalions, each with one medium and two light companies, including 324 *Pz.Kpfw. I, II* and ex-Czechoslovak Army 35(t) and 38(t) light tanks equipped with 2cm guns. Motorised infantry support was provided by the 4,409-man Motorised Rifle Brigade, comprising two

motorised battalions, each with a motorcycle, machine-gun, heavy and two motorised rifle companies; and a motorcycle battalion with a machine-gun, heavy and three companies. The motorised divisional support units comprised a reconnaissance battalion with 48 armoured cars; an artillery regiment with one light (10.5cm) and one heavy (15cm) towed battalions, or two light battalions, each with three batteries; anti-tank, engineer and signals battalions; and divisional services - up to ten motorised transport columns, a medical company, field hospital, Military Police troop and Field Post-Office.

Before the outbreak of war in September 1939 the German Army possessed 35 line infantry divisions numbered in the 1-46 series. These regular '1st Wave' divisions, were the largest, best equipped, and best trained divisions, and 30 of these participated in the Western Campaign. They were joined by 45 of the 2nd Wave divisions - reserve troops with regular cadres; 3rd Wave, with First World War reservists; 4th Wave - men who missed the introduction of military conscription in March 1935; 5th Wave - older reservists with captured Czech equipment; 7th Wave - Austrians and Germans from newly annexed western Poland and Bohemia-Moravia, and 8th Wave frontier-defence divisions.

A 16,977-man Infantry Division comprised three infantry regiments, each 3,049-man regiment having three infantry battalions, supported by a 180-man infantry-gun company and a 17-man anti-tank company. A 860-man

Left: France, May 1940. An Artillery *Wachtmeister* acting as a Battery Sergeant Major (*Hauptwachtmeisterdiensttue*), wearing the M1935 service uniform with M1935 Other Ranks field-cap. Note his double cuff braids, indicating his appointment, and the lack of the usual report-book stuffed into the front of his tunic. He wears a 1939 Iron Cross 2nd Class ribbon and the bronze SA Defence-Badge. (Friedrich Heermann)

Below: Lichtevelde, Belgium, May 1940. Officers in M1935 field uniform hold an impromptu meeting. Note the M1934 field cap worn by three officers and the leather greatcoat worn by the Major (2nd left). The *Hauptmann* (2nd right) is saluting before shaking the hand of the Major (1st right). (Josef Charita)



battalion had three rifle companies supported by a 190-man machine-gun company, and a 201-man rifle company had three rifle platoons, each 50-man platoon comprising a staff, light-grenade launcher team and four 40-man rifle sections. A Rifle Section had a commander, deputy and five riflemen, all armed with the standard *Karabiner 98k* rifle, and a three-man light machine-gun team, the 1st Gunner operating the *LMG34* light machine-gun, the 2nd Gunner carrying a *P08 Luger* or *Walther P38* pistol, the 3rd Gunner carrying a rifle. A reconnaissance battalion, with mounted, bicycle and support squadrons, a four-battalion artillery regiment, anti-tank, engineers and signals battalions made up the divisional support units, with divisional services comprising up to ten motorised and horse-drawn transport columns, medical and veterinary companies, a motorised field hospital, Military Police troop and Field Post-Office.

On 12 October 1937 four infantry divisions - 2, 13, 20, 29 - were converted to motorised divisions, and allocated to XIV Motorised Corps. They had the same organisation as line infantry, with three motorised infantry (from October/November 1939) regiments. The division advanced in lorries, the motorised infantry troops dismounting to engage the enemy on foot. The elite *Großdeutschland* Motorised Regiment, formed in October 1939 and originally the Berlin Guard Regiment, operated directly under the Army High Command.

The Western Campaign exposed clear deficiencies in equipment and organisation. The motorised infantry and motorised rifle regiments, inefficiently divided between the Infantry and *Panzer* branches respectively, could not travel fast enough to support the rapidly advancing tank regiments and had to dismount before engaging the enemy. Sd.Kfz.251 armoured personnel carriers were gradually introduced to allow these troops, which in June 1943 were all mixed as *Panzergrenadier* regiments, to fight as mechanised infantry, but most of these continued to operate from lorries as before. Similarly the limited mobility of the *Panzer* Division's artillery regiments led to the development of Assault Artillery units with self-propelled guns.

The campaign in France and the Low Countries included representatives of rather types of divisions, some modern, others obsolescent. The unique 22nd Airlanding Infantry Division flew in Junkers 52/3m transport aircraft to support *Luftwaffe* paratroopers from 7th Air Division in the Netherlands, and the élite 1st Mountain Division fought as ordinary infantry. The 1st Cavalry Division, bearer of a proud but almost irrelevant mounted tradition, became the 24th *Panzer* Division in November 1941, although mounted cavalry units reappeared in late 1942 in Russia. Heinrich Himmler's SS army, officially designated the *Waffen-SS* on 6 December 1939, a force which grew to become a bitter rival of the Army, deployed all its field units — *Leibstandarte SS Adolf Hitler* motorised regiment, *Verfügungs* and *Totenkopf* motorised divisions and the *Polizei* infantry division.

### The German soldier

The German Army of 1940 was the product of a country which had for seven years been indoctrinated with Hitler's 'Social Darwinism', which claimed that human beings and even states were subject to the

same laws as animals. Some were innately strong, others weak, and it was the duty and instinct of the strong to dominate and if necessary destroy the weak. Such principles had clear applications on the battlefield, reinforcing traditional military doctrines which stressed attack and retreat as a last resort. Many German troops, especially from *Waffen-SS* units, sincerely held these convictions, but must fight as part of a cohesive and successful organisation, for whom, up to December 1941, victory had become a habit.

German general-officers and field-officers, many of whom were veterans of the First World War, had served in the inter-war *Reichswehr*, and had years of practical and theoretical military experience. They were expected to give strong and effective leadership to the junior officers and NCOs commanding the battalions, companies and platoons. In turn the junior commanders were required to lead from the front, and to show considerable personal initiative under rapidly changing combat conditions. They also had to take a paternal interest in their men — addressing them as *Kinder* ('my children') and sharing the same rations. The men were thoroughly trained in their present duties and also for eventual promotion to NCO rank.

Whilst general-officers, commanding army-groups, armies, corps and divisions and corporals leading sections had roughly the same command responsibilities as their counterparts in the British Army, the intermediate units were commanded by German officers of lower rank and seniority than their British equivalents. A Regiment (equal to a British brigade) was commanded by a Colonel or Lieutenant-Colonel — in the British Army a Brigadier, a Battalion by a Lieutenant-Colonel, Major or Captain — in the British Army a Lieutenant-Colonel, and a Company by a Lieutenant or 2nd Lieutenant — in the British Army a Major. Even under the pressures of wartime British Army

platoons were always commanded by subalterns — the introduction of the Warrant Officer Class III in 1938 to provide non-commissioned platoon commanders was effectively abandoned in 1940. Most German platoons however were commanded by senior NCOs of *Oberfeldwebel* and *Feldwebel* rank. Similarly an NCO as junior as Corporal (*Untersoffizier*) could be appointed as Company Sergeant Major. Although the comparison is distorted by the British practice of promoting suitable mid-leaders to a temporary rank which reflected their responsibilities, German troops were expected to exercise field command at an earlier age than their British equivalents.

### Uniforms and insignia of the Blitzkrieg

The standard field uniform of the German officer usually consisted of the characteristic 'coal-scuttle' M1916 or M1935 steel-helmet or M1938 peakless field-cap, the M1935 officers' field-tunic, the M1935 field grenaier when ordered, grey suede gloves, M1935 stone-grey breeches and black high-boots. Personal equipment was usually limited to a brown leather belt with PO8 or P38 pistol in a brown leather holster.

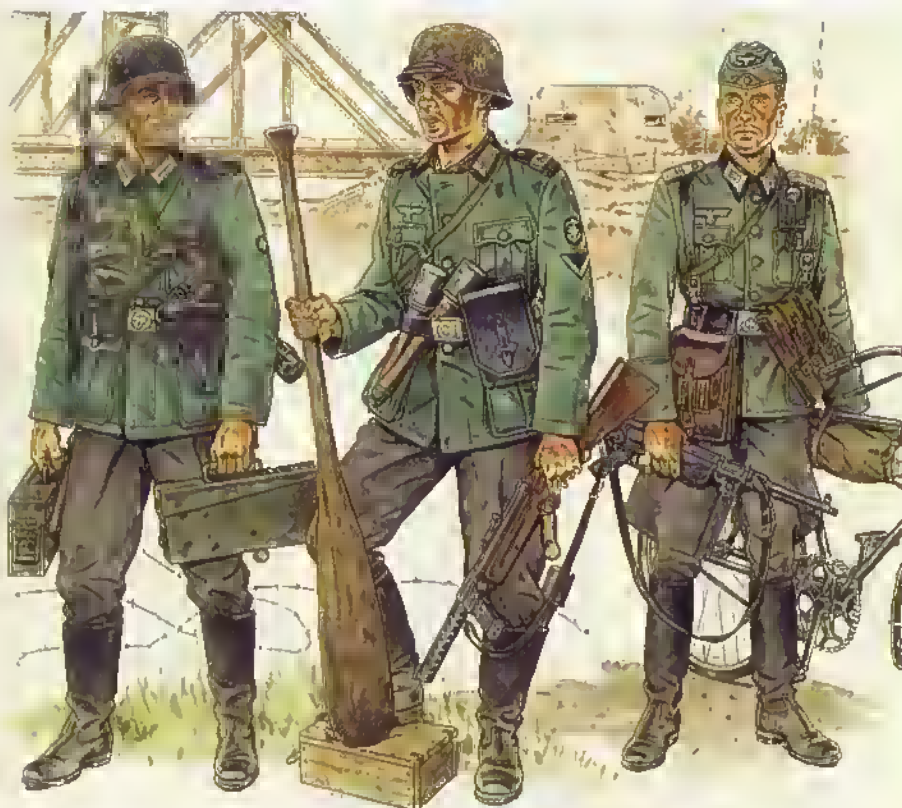
NCOs and men wore the steel helmet or M1934 Other Ranks' peakless field-cap, M1935 Other Ranks field-tunic and M1935 Other Ranks' field-grenaier, M1935 stone-grey trousers and black 'dice-shaker' marching-boots. Standard rifleman's equipment consisted of black leather belt and infantry support Y-straps, ammunition pouches, bayonet, entrenching-mole, bread-bag, canteen, mess-tin, shelter-quarter, gas-cap and gas-mask in its distinctive corrugated canister.

This uniform was basically the uniform prescribed on 22 December 1920 for adoption on 1 January 1921 by the *Reichsheer*, popularly but inaccurately called the *Reichswehr*, which had replaced the defeated Army of the First World War. This uniform was modified in July 1929 by changing the uniform colour from a plain mid-grey to a greenish grey, whilst confusingly retaining the traditional description of *feldgrau* (field-grey), and in September 1935 adding contrasting collars and shoulder-straps in a finely woven bluish dark-green facing cloth.

The M1935 uniform worn in 1940 has become the enduring image of the German soldier in the Second World War, but it was already obsolescent and was soon to change. From May 1940 the bluish dark-green facing cloth of the collars and shoulder-straps were being replaced by plain uniform cloth, and



Left: Northern France, May 1940. Two soldiers in M1935 field uniform, the NCO (left) carrying a MP28/II Schmetsser sub machine gun, guard British prisoners. Note the general absence of field-equipment — M1938 gas-mask canister and M1931 canvas bread-bag and bayonet — but no Y-straps. (Josef Charlita)



Above: German Soldiers in the Netherlands and Belgium, painting by Stephen Andrew. Right, Lieutenant, Aufklärungsabteilung 254, field uniform, Breda, Netherlands, May 1940. Left, Oberschütze, Infanterieregiment 49, field uniform, Nimur, Belgium, May 1940. Centre, Gefreiter, Pionierbataillon 30, Rivel Meusa, Belgium, May 1940.

Right: German Soldiers in France, painting by Stephen Andrew. Right, Major, Panzerregiment 25, field uniform, Cambrai, France, May 1940. Left, Panzerschütze, Panzeraufklärungsabteilung 5, field uniform, Alame, France, May 1940. Centre, Hauptmann, Infanterieregiment (mot.) Großdeutschland, field uniform, Stonno, France, May 1940.

subsequent wartime shortages forced a steady deterioration in the quality of the cloth. The marching-boots, which medical research had already condemned as unhealthy and the cause of foot and calf complaints, began to be replaced by ankle-boots and British-style webbing ankle-gaiters. Already in 1935 tank-crews had been issued a stylish and more modernistic uniform comprising a black double-breasted short tunic and bloused trousers, and this proved so popular that it

was adopted by other troops in *Panzer* divisions and in May 1940 a *feldgrau* version was produced, initially for Assault Artillery crews. By May 1945 the German soldier, with his M1944 field blouse or double-breasted tunic and ankle-gaiters had begun to resemble more closely a British soldier than a comrade from 1940.

Most of the insignia of 1940 had originally been introduced in December 1920, and modified in 1934-5, but some could be traced

back even further to the late 19th century: the eagle and swastika, cockade and wreath worn on field and service-caps was introduced in September 1935 and the eagle and swastika worn above the right breast-pocket of the field tunic from February 1934. The collar-patches for all ranks below General-Officer, consisting of two 'guards-braids', had been reserved until November 1918 for élite Guards regiments and extended for all personnel from December 1920. The pattern of all officers' shoulder-boards dates back in 1888 whilst NCOs' and Men's shoulder-straps and Men's sleeve chevrons had been introduced in 1920. German troops proved understandably reluctant to remove the traditional and highly prized unit letters and numbers on their shoulder-boards and straps, in spite of the clear threat to field security.

### Conclusion

The German Army of 1940 contained line infantry and mixed cavalry and horse-drawn supply columns of First World War vintage and armoured units employing tactics which would not have looked out of place in the Gulf War of 1991.

Failure teaches lessons but success encourages self-deception. The Franco-German Armistice, signed on 22 June at Compiègne, near Paris, on precisely the same spot and in the same railway carriage where Germany had signed the Armistice on 11 November 1918, was the pinnacle of the German Army's military success and Hitler's political achievement. Hitler believed that no nation could now prevent him dominating Europe, and that the *Wehrmacht*, but principally the German Army, was strong enough to gain this prize. After June 1940, however, success became steadily more elusive as Germany attempted conquests, such as Great Britain, North Africa and especially the Soviet Union, which were beyond its capabilities, and in May 1945 it was decisively

crushed by an enemy who had suffered the cruel defeat of Summer 1940 and learned its bitter lessons.

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# Apocalypse Then

In the feature film *Apocalypse Now*, a US Special Forces Advisor went 'native' with tribesmen deep in the Vietnamese jungle. PAUL MIRALDI tells the true story of the Green Berets sent in to advise Montagnard tribesmen and describes both their uniforms and equipment.

In 1957, 12 men from the 14th Special Forces Detachment, 1st SFGA arrived in Vietnam to begin commando training of 58 selected Vietnamese NCOs and officers in Nha Trang. Since South Vietnam had no Special Forces of their own, these Americans trained soldiers that would become the core of the Vietnamese 1st Observation Group. By 1961 these men had become members of an SF type unit, the 77th Observation Group, in honour of the American Special Forces Group which had since been renamed the SFGA. In late November of that same year, twenty-eight men

from the 1st SFGA arrived from Okinawa to train selected members of the Vietnamese 77th group in the art of long range patrolling, demolition, medical and guerrilla type operations. Afterwards many of these agents were used in cross-border raids into North Vietnam. The majority was misused by Diem as his own personal palace guards in Saigon. The primary assignment for Special Forces in Vietnam at this time was the growing paramilitary force that would help Diem render an armed

presence at the village level.

One of these paramilitary forces was the Area Development Program, renamed the CIDG program. CIDG stood for Civil Irregular Defence Group. This was started in 1961 under the control of the CIA. The goal

Right: Recreated Special Forces NCO (A-332), Dak To 1962-1963. Dak To was a border monitoring point in the Sedang inhabited area of Kontum Province. This isolated and remote camp was intended as a base for the special Montagnard companies, trailwatchers formed to help watch South Vietnam's west frontier. In August, 1962, Team A-322, from 1st Special Forces Group, arrived to begin training these primitive peoples in the trail monitoring techniques. Before the tropical uniform was adopted, Natlck Labs developed several prototype test uniforms to provide lightweight jungle clothing to Special Forces personnel. The T61-3 special warfare hot weather shirt, worn here, was constructed of 6 ounce nylon/cotton poplin blond in Army shade olive green 107. The test uniform resembled the utility uniform's design, and were delivered to SE Asia in large quantities. Early US fears of chemical agent attacks from Chinese intervention in SE Asia was reflected in the development of this uniform. The shirt has an inside gas flap, and on some versions there were buttons inside the front, neckline, and cuffs for attaching the chemical warfare/thermal liner underneath. Another aspect of the shirt were the button cuffs. Beginning in September 1962, in accordance with Operation Switchback, Headquarters, US Army Special Forces (Provisional) Vietnam, was activated in Southeast Asia under the Military Assistance Command. The flash on this SF's beret was worn unofficially and was first proposed as the single flash to represent all teams TDY in Vietnam prior to the arrival of the 5th Group in October, 1964. It is locally manufactured by hand with yellow thread, with three diagonal red stripes. Although never approved, it was based on the design and colours of the South Vietnamese flag. Coincidentally, it represented the two colours of the teams supplying men TDY, the 1st and the 7th.

Right: Two American Special Forces advisors along with two Vietnamese LLDB NCO in tiger stripes. Note the lack of headgear on all four. (1966)





Left: Recreated An Lac 1967, Det A-234. Camp An Lac, located in the Miong River Valley of Darlac Province, Special Forces used this base to interdct VC supply routes in the lower central highlands. Det A-234 relocated to An Lac after closing Phay Sunh in early 1965. An Lac was different from most camps in 1967. One difference was Capt Do Cao Bo (right), a Jarai tribesman who is the camp commander. At An Lac, Capt Bo commands a mixed CIDG force of Miong and Koho. The fact that a Montagnard is commander of An Lac indicates a significant change in attitude by the government of South Vietnam, since the open revolts of Montagnard tribesmen in 1965. Capt Bo wears an early model ARVN Ranger pattern shirt and pants. The shirt features two lower pockets along with his rank of Dai Uy pinned to his collar and a printed LLDB patch on his sleeve. Around his waist he wears a Vietnamese-made cowboy rig for his .45 cal model pistol. He wears a green Vietnamese-made beret with no flash. Center is the camp's executive officer. He wears the second model poplin jungle fatigues with full colour US Army basic parachute wings and a CIB rank and branch of service are both subdued and Vietnamese made. On his pocket is a silk woven Vietnamese LLDB patch. He holds a map of An Lac and its surrounding area. The NCD on the left is the camp's Demo Sgt, and wears the second model DG-107 cotton fatigues. On his utility shirt are subdued name, US Army strip and basic airborne wings. He also wears full-colour E-S chevrons, silk woven Vietnamese airborne wings and an LLDB pocket hanger. Matching pants are

Right: Recreated Special Forces Capt 1966, Camp Duc Lap, Quang Duc Province A-239. The shirt worn here by Camp Duc Lap's CD is a Vietnamese copy of a first pattern utility shirt with truncated sleeves, Vietnamese plastic buttons, and made with poplin material. The US Army strip is a stitched variation instead of the typical woven ones. Above that are WWII khaki-backed airborne wings. His nametape is a hand-sewn variation done on white engineer tape. Both rank and all defence artillery are of US manufacture. The patch on his pocket is the machine silk woven comp patch. The crossbow symbolises Montagnard involvement. Many of the CIDG troops at Duc Lap were of Rhade and Miong ethnic descent. The colours of the patch incorporate the South Vietnamese flag, and the sword represents Special Forces involvement in this program. Pinned between the 4th and 5th button is Captain's Vietnamese equivalent rank of Dai Uy. On his hip he carries the Special Forces 'Square Tip bolo', a direct descendent of the Japanese rice knives of the 16th century. The knife featured a hardwood handle painted black and a heavy bright polished 9.25 blade. The sheath had a brown leather belt hanger, olive drab painted aluminium sheath with a wooden insert. The aluminium sheath was later replaced because it rattled too much during operations. The captain wears an OD Green Vietnamese cowboy hat popular with American Advisors and Vietnamese Strikers. Standing next to the captain is the camp radio operator. The Spc 4 wears a private purchase BVD short-sleeved shirt. On it are early khaki backed airborne wings and hand sewn Vietnamese jump wings. Pinned to his pocket flap is a CIDG beer can DI. The Green Beret is US made with a 5th Group flash and an enamelled Distinct Insignia. On his pistol belt he carries a private purchase Puma Sports knife. Along with the knife, he carries a captured 7.62 Tokarev (TT-33) pistol. It was furnished by the Soviets to all the satellite and com bloc countries since the end of WWII, having been repined in the Soviet Army by the Makarov and Stechkin pistols. He carries the pistol in a crude Vietnamese made cowboy holster designed to hold the Tokarev. Both men stand inside the wire of the newly established camp at the old site of Bon Sar Pa, Nov 1966.



worn with a black web belt with a brass roller buckle. On his pistol belt is worn a .45 cal M1911 pistol in its black 1916 holster. Both Americans wear the wool beret, rifle green Army shade 297 with 5th flash.

was to recruit from the many isolated ethnic minorities to create paramilitary groups loyal to the US advisors and the government of South Vietnam. The CIDG program was intended to establish village defensive centres in territories of minimal governmental control where VC presence was a factor. The initial intent was that from these bases Special Forces could train irregular 'Strike Forces' to carry out extended counterinsurgency operations.

The CIDGs, as they would become known, were initially composed of Montagnards (highlanders, in French). The Montagnards comprised more than a hundred nomadic tribes and their culture and language differed among each group. All Montagnards shared a deep hatred of the Vietnamese who

Right: Special Forces advisor outside the War Moose lodge. He wears the first model "exposed button" jungle fatigues with a mix of full colour insignia including airborne wings and C.I.B. and subdued nametape and US Army. Note that the advisor doesn't wear his beret or any headgear. (clica 1966)

had regarded them as inferior savages and an equally intense desire to be left alone.

The CIA realised that several of these mountain tribes had fought for the French in the First Indochina War, and it was decided to build on this favourable experience by gaining Montagnard allegiance. This task fell on the shoulders of Special Forces, because the

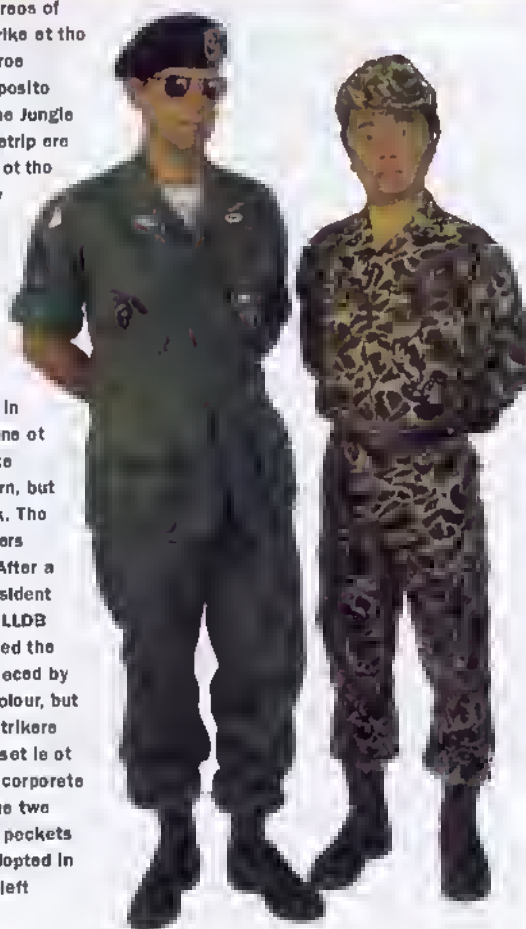
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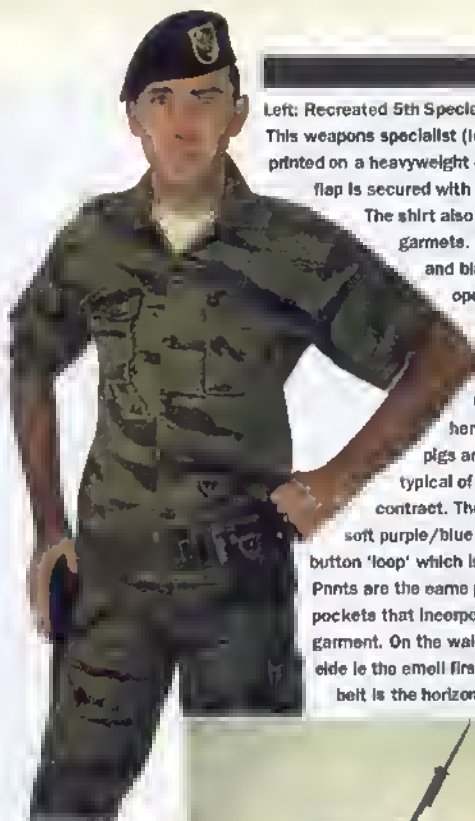
Right: Recreated Special Forces NCD, A-301, Trang Sup, 1967. This Special Forces NCD of Detachment A-301 (right) coaches a CIDG trainee in the use of the M-1 Rocket Launcher at the III Corps CIDG Training Centre located at Camp Trang Sup in Tay Ninh Province, 1967. The US advisor wears a set of tiger stripe and a matching tiger stripe boonie hat. Around his neck is the unit's coloured scarf which is a medium blue; each of the minority groups in the CIDG program had a different coloured scarf. Jungle boots worn here are the improved version featuring ankle supports and an integral spike resistant insole made of aluminium to counter the VC punji sticks. The CIDG trainee (left) prepares to fire the M-1 Rocket Launcher, sometimes called the Bazooka after Bob Barnes' musical instrument that resembled the launcher. The M-1 weighed 3.25 pounds, was loaded from the rear and fired electrically. The mesh screen on the front of the tube is a blast shield to protect the firer from burning rocket propellant. The CIDG wears the same pattern tiger stripe as the advisor but much more faded. Early black all leather combat boots with toe cap are still worn in 1967 by CIDG personnel. Headgear is another example of the cowboy hat in the Duckhunter pattern.



Bottom: Recreated Camp Bunerd A-344, 1967. On April 2nd, 1967, 3DD parachutes from Capt Wilson's Detachment A-503, Mike Force, filled the sky to secure the future campsite at Camp Bunerd in Phuoc Long Province. This was the first Special Forces led mass CIDG parachute jump of the war, named Operation Harvest Moon and aimed at denying the VC access to War Zone D and local rice fields. Capt Brennan's Detachment A-344 along with 7DD CIDG troops arrived by helicopter. These two individuals typify men serving at the newly established camp. The US Special Forces advisor on the left wears the third model poplin jungle fatigues. The final pattern did away with both epaulettes and side tuck-in tabs. This was to be the final change to the uniform other than the material being changed to cotton ripstop reinforced with nylon fibres in late 1967. Suspended from a button on his left pocket in a plastic pocket hanger is the Vietnamese Special Forces (LLDB) badge. The green field represented the green jungles and mountains that were the most effective areas of operation for a guerrilla-type force. The white parachute portrays the unit's ability to strike at the enemy's rear area; the tiger, the most feared creature in the jungles of Vietnam. The three lightning bolts represent the three means of deployment — air, land and sea. On the opposite pocket is a crude Vietnamese-made jungle expert badge, showing he is a graduate of the Jungle Operation Training Centre at Fort Sherman, Panama. Above his Vietnamese-made namestrip are the honorarily-awarded Vietnamese airborne wings, given to airborne-qualified members of the 5th SFGA, who were recommended by an element of the group. On his left side is a very unusual silk woven US Army strip. These were believed to have been made in-country, and were usually found on Special Forces uniforms. Above it are basic US Airborne wings and a combat Infantryman's badge. The 'Screaming Eagle' of the 101st Airborne on his right shoulder shows a combat tour with that unit. The Special Forces patch, worn on the sleeve, was originally submitted by Capt Fry, a member of the 77th. The teal-blue-and-yellow colour scheme corresponds to the colours used in unit flags of unassigned organisations. The arrowhead shape, first used by the 1st Special Service Force of WWII as a patch, alluded to the American Indians' basic skills in which SF personnel are trained. The dagger or sword represent the unconventional means of Special Forces operations, while the three lightning bolts represent their ability to strike rapidly by air, sea or land. Initially, a matching teal-blue-and-yellow airborne tab was worn, but in 1958 the Quartermaster General directed that the tab be changed to yellow on black. The green beret, the primary symbol of Special Forces, first originated in 1953 when members began to procure Canadian berets for test purposes on the 10th in Bad Tolz, Germany. After a long and difficult battle for the adoption of the beret, it was finally authorised after President Kennedy declared it was a 'symbol of excellence and a badge of courage'. Worn by the LLDB camp commander (right) is another example of the duckhunter pattern, sometimes called the leopard pattern. These spotted pattern uniforms were utilised from the 1950s until replaced by the tigerstripe fatigues in the early 1960s. There were many variations in styling and colour, but all were recognisable as the 'duckhunter' pattern. The GVN mainly outfitted the CIDG strikers with these uniforms, but other units incorporated this pattern all through the war. This set is of Vietnamese manufacture, and is printed on lightweight cotton material. The trousers incorporate two button tuck-in tabs on either hip, two rear pockets, two cargo pockets, but lack the two pockets usually found on American garments. The matching shirt has two small breast pockets and buttoned cuffs. Worn on his left sleeve is a silk woven subdued LLDB patch first adopted in late 1963. Above his right pocket are his Vietnamese silk woven wings, and above his left pocket are US wings awarded honorarily to the Vets by their American counterparts.







Left: Recreated 5th Special Forces NCOs, A-217 CIDG Border Surveillance Company, Plei-Me 1965. This weapons specialist (left) wears another example of duckhunter camouflage. The pattern is printed on a heavyweight cotton material and is cut long for additional lower pockets. Each pocket flap is secured with two Vietnamese buttons. Four-pocket shirts in this pattern were unusual. The shirt also features a bellow gusset on each side, like most Vietnamese-made garments. Both men wear the rifle green beret with the recently-adopted yellow, red and black flash to represent all Special Forces groups providing teams operating in Vietnam starting in 1964. The black background with white border indicated the 5th Group, which provided the HQ and some of the TDY teams. The red and yellow strips placed across the black field are taken from the flashes of the 7th and 1st, who also provided teams. The stripes were also the national colours of South Vietnam. In his hand is a Montagnard ceremonial rice knife used for cutting off the heads of pigs and chickens. Det A-217 Commo Sgt (right) wears a set of tigerstripe typical of garments made under the Mutual Defence Assistance Program (MDAP) contract. The pattern was made of a mediumweight cotton fabric, and has faded to a soft purple/blue colour due to inferior dye vats. The two chest pockets have a single button 'loop' which is covered by the pocket flap, common among Asian tigerstripe garments. Pants are the same pattern printed on the same midweight material. They feature two cargo pockets that incorporate the single-gusset bellow, and are quite large for an Asian-made garment. On the waistline is a two-button takeup tab. Below the cargo pocket on only the left side is the small first aid/compass pouch, sometimes called the 'cigarette pocket'. Pistol belt is the horizontal weave individual equipment belt with the new prototype Davis fastener that later would be incorporated in the nylon MLBE. The .45 cal pistol is worn here in a 1916 black leather holster along with a locally-made leather twin-coil mag pouch.



Left: Recreated An Khe Det. A-4 1965. These two Americans show the diversity of uniforms worn by US advisors in 1965. Both men are from Camp An Khe, also known as An Tuc, and was located along Highway 19. These two are part of a patrol whose job it is to provide security along these lifelines that connect the government to small rural towns. The man on the left wears a mismatched set of duckhunter that has faded to pink and purple. These sets were first procured by CIA personnel operating in Southeast Asia in the mid-50s from US sporting goods outlets. As the war outgrew CIA control, the US Government placed orders for uniforms with other Southeast Asian countries under the Mutual Defence Assistance Program (MDAP). Like most things, Vietnamese copies of these were soon available in several styles and sizes. He carries an M-1 bandoleer around his waist with spare 20 round magazines and stripper clips. His rucksack is a locally procured copy of a captured NVA 3-pocket pack. Attached to it is an early two quart canteen. Web gear is the M1956 cotton canvas H suspenders with a WWII issue M1936 pistol belt. Attached to the pistol belt is a 15 round carbine magazine pouch along with a universal pouch, along with his side arm, a 1911 pistol. His weapon is the semiautomatic M-1 carbine with bayonet affixed in case of Viet Cong ambush at close range. Headgear is the green 1945 cotton field cap, although locally-produced versions in duckhunter were also available. The man on the right wears a silver-pattern tigerstripe shirt and a mismatched set of tiger pants produced in Japan. The shirt features check pockets with a single-button flap. The trousers feature two rear pockets and two thigh pockets, each with a two-button closure along with an additional field dressing pocket or 'cigarette' on the lower left leg. All pockets are typical of Asian garments having a single bellow gusset on one side edge. Web gear is a combination of M1956 and M1948 suspenders. Weapon is the M-1 carbine also. Both men wear the 1965 jungle boots lacking the reinforcement at the ankles.

Left: Recreated Special Forces NCO's Camp, Cung Sun, Phu Yen Province (A-311) 1962. Worn here by these early Green Berets (A-311) are two versions of US commercial duckhunter. The faded lightweight top, worn by the advisor on the left, features two small lower pockets secured with one button each. The US-produced commercial pattern was a direct copy of the WWII Marine Corps pattern, and had larger spots and a busier pattern than the Vietnamese predecessor. OG-107 trousers are worn outside his WWII brown jungle boots. Headgear is the M1945 field cap. Worn over the shoulder is a WWII-era Vickers bag, which was intended to hold the long M3 grease gun magazine and tommygun magazines. This Green Beret carries extra mags for this Thompson submachinegun. The bag could be attached to the pistol belt by means of a large loop in the back or by the carrying strap shown here. His partner (right) wears a full set of the Sears and Roebuck camouflage. Headgear is the 1951 cotton field cap, or patrol cap as it came to be known, and featured a wool/cotton flap that could be lowered to cover the wearer's ears during the rainy season. He carries a WWII MP40 machine pistol and a .45 calibre pistol in an M-7 russet shoulder holster. It was not uncommon to see WWII weapons being used as late as 1962, especially by members of A-311 at Cung Sun.

Left (kneeling figure): Recreated Special Forces Advisor A-21, Camp Hiep Hoa, Plain of Reeds 1963. In July 1963, Camp Hiep Hoa in the Plain of Reeds was occupied by its second team, A-21, led by Capt Doug Home, relieving Team A-19. This was the first Special Forces Camp overrun during the war. The uniform worn by this early Green Beret is the French Veste de Saout mlie 1947/53 camouflage smock. This was the third model French camo known as the lizard pattern, featuring hard brush strokes and a feathering off pattern of red-brown and light green on a tan khaki background. The jump smock featured two large 'bellow' breast pockets secured with three snap fasteners. There is a large pocket behind the right pocket, secured with a zipper.



**Left: Recreated A-502 Special Forces Medic, NHA Trang 1970.** The 25-week medical course is the most difficult in the service, although at one time it lasted 39 weeks. It is divided into 13 weeks at the Army's Academy of Health Sciences at Ft Sam Houston, Texas, followed by 6 weeks of on-the-job training at an Army hospital and then 6 weeks of patient care and lab techniques. Regardless of the course length, the Special

Forces Medic is extensively trained in advanced field medical procedures and is highly respected by his fellow team members. To give the beret character, Special Forces troops removed the extra lining, washed it in hot water a couple of times and dried the beret in the sun. In Vietnam, it was common practice to replace the black cotton lining with an ornately-embroidered one with the distinctive insignia, usually a tiger or dragon or other design relating to the organisation. Uniform worn here is the final version being produced in cotton ripstop poplin. He wears a mixture of subdued and full-colour insignia, not uncommon even this late in the war.

Pinned to his right pocket is a medical caduceus. Slightly above that he wears his watch through the top buttonhole. Worn over his shoulder is the medical supply set known as the 'unit one' bag. This is an example of the post-68 version, made of a rubberised cotton cloth. Inside its many pockets would be several sizes of dressings, bandages, adhesive strips, aspirin, anti-malaria pills and his basic instrument set. It wouldn't be uncommon to find medical items from the 40s and 50s inside. Medical personnel such as this one were commonly referred to as 'Buc Si', which was Vietnamese for doctor, by both his fellow team members and by the indigenous troops. On his hip is his .45 calibre 1911 pistol in a black 1916

holster. The pistol served two purposes — it was regarded as a symbol of authority as well as personal protection.

**Right: Thai Ranger Knife, made in Thailand for heavy jungle use.**

Mimagnards accepted only those who shared their primitive lifestyles and dangers. SF troops quickly gained the trust of these simple people and developed close relationships with them, in many cases they were even made members of the tribe. The CIDG 'strikers' were organised into local defence forces and were considered civilian employees of the US government. They were recruited, fed, housed, trained and paid by US SF, not the ARVN. By the end of 1963, 22 SF A-teams had organised 18,000 CIDG strikers.

A typical A-team at full strength consisted of twelve men, a Team Leader, Executive Officer, Team Sergeant, Heavy Weapons Leader, Intelligence Sgt, Light Weapons Leader, Medical Specialist, Radio Operator Supervisor, Assistant Medical Specialist, Demolition Sgt, Chief Radio Operator, Combat Demolitions Specialist. In 1968, a new and improved 14 man A-team was employed, adding a Civic Action Psychological operations

officer and specialist aiding the counterinsurgency role of SF.

### Early History of Uniforms

Although the US had been working on a variety of hot-wet/hot-dry tropical and desert clothing from 1952-1955, Special Forces arriving in Vietnam were still wearing the uncomfortable and heavy all cotton OG 107 uniforms. In early 1960, Natick Laboratories sent several prototype uniforms to provide Special Forces serving in SE Asia with lightweight jungle clothing. The shirt and trousers, Man's Cotton OG 107, Special Warfare T61-3 and T62-4 were made of a 6 ounce nylon/cotton poplin blend and resembled the utility uniform's appearance but had a button-in chemical suit, a large gas flap and buttoned cuffs. The new lightweight test uniforms were shipped to Vietnam in



**Above: Bowie Knife, Tiu-Bal — private purchase knife, virtually indestructible, in factory sheath ordered from Tiu-Bal company, favourite of Special Forces.**

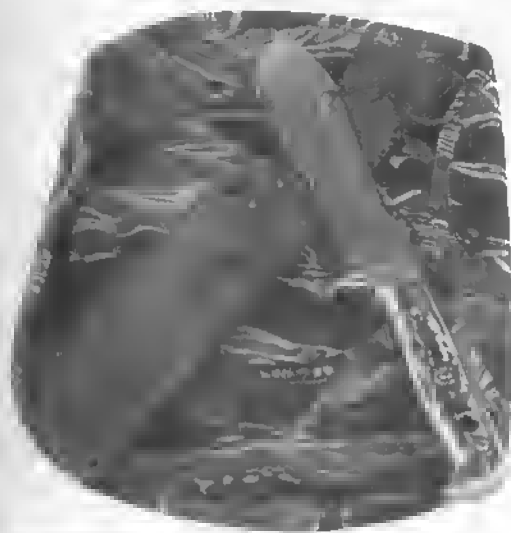


**Above: Special Forces round tip bolo with tan handle (top) and round tip bolo, Special Forces, 3rd model with wrist strap, black handle, and sheath (bottom).**

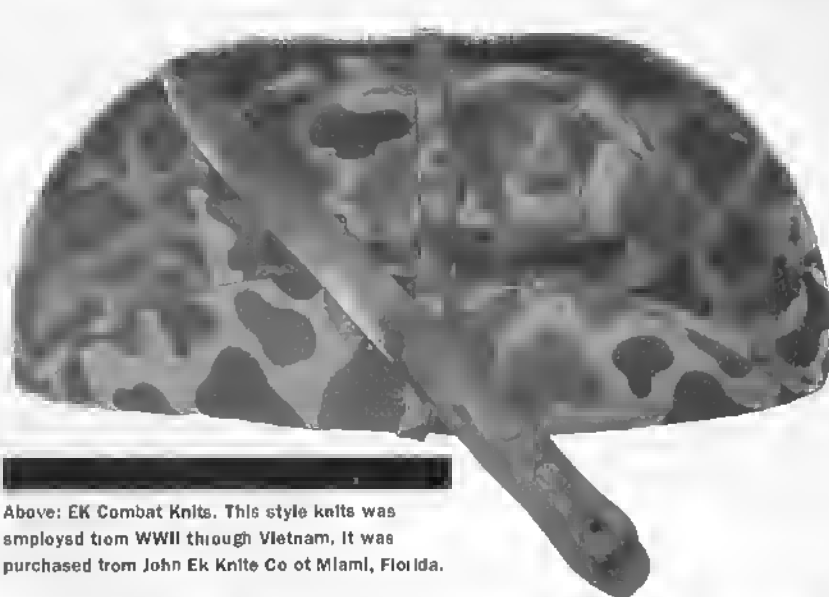


significant quantity and were worn by some SF personnel as late as 1965. Alongside lightweight uniforms, Natick Laboratories began supporting SF operations with a number of existence and survival items beginning in 1962, to include poncho liners, lightweight jungle hammocks, collapsible two quart canteens, multipurpose nets, and a nylon lightweight rucksack. All items were type classed 'limited production' for special warfare purposes and were sent immediately to Southeast Asia for Special Forces operational requirements.

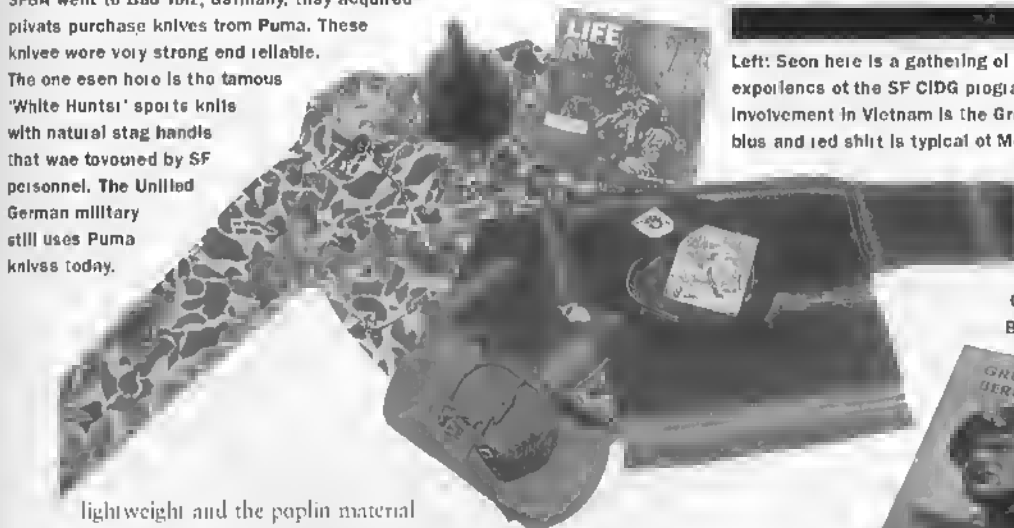
Leigh Wade, author of *Tan Phu*, four tour veteran of Special Forces, remembers being debriefed after wearing the new test uniforms and jungle boots. The overall attitude toward the uniforms was favourable, they were



Above: Puma 'White Hunter' Knife. When the 10th SFGA went to Bad Tolz, Germany, they acquired private purchase knives from Puma. These knives were very strong and reliable. The one seen here is the famous 'White Hunter' sports knife with natural stag handle that was favoured by SF personnel. The Unifed German military still uses Puma knives today.



Above: EK Combat Knives. This style knife was employed from WWII through Vietnam. It was purchased from John Ek Knife Co of Miami, Florida.



lightweight and the poplin material was comfortable and cool. The jungle boots received mixed reviews, many of the early advisers did not like the tread pattern of the jungle boot, claiming it was such a small pattern that the mud would stick, making the boot very heavy. Wade also recalls a strong dislike for the experimental jungle hammock, which was an improved version of the 1942 pattern hammocks. They weighed 15 pounds and had a sewn in mosquito netting and a rubberised nylon top that collected water and dumped it on the user at the most inopportune time. Like many of the American advisers, Wade preferred to construct a makeshift hammock out of the multipurpose net, which was strong enough to support a load of 200 pounds. The net had a variety of uses besides a makeshift hammock, it could be a litter, cache container, sniper's roost or camouflage cover. The Montagnards used it often for trapping animals, along with catching fish and crabs in the rice paddies.

Contrary to popular belief, the Green Beret wasn't worn very often. According to Leigh Wade, most of the time no headgear was seen, or a Vietnamese made jungle flop hat was worn more often than not. The berets were hot and provided no protection from the tropical sun. The only real times the berets were worn was when visiting big shots arrived at camp,

when you were around other US military personnel in the rear such as Nha Trang at the HQ, or for photo opportunities. The bush hat or flap hat was worn on operation because it provided protection for the neck and face from the fierce heat.

In 1963, the basic issue for a CIDG striker was two sets of tiger stripe fatigues, a matching flop hat or boonie hat, one pair of the Bata boots, a pistol belt, one canteen, an indigenous ticksack and a weapon. US advisers were usually able to obtain two sets of tigerstripe or duckhunter if available in a regular size. ●

#### Acknowledgements

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Left: Seen here is a gathering of items and garments indicative of daily experiences of the SF CIDG program. The most clearly recognisable symbol of US involvement in Vietnam is the Green Beret seen here with the TDY flash. The blue and red shirt is typical of Montagnard garments; each tribe hand wove cloth for sarongs and linencloths in its own unique pattern, very similar to Scottish clans with their tartans. Beside it is a cowboy hat in an odd tiger stripe pattern along with a Life magazine, Nov, 1964 issue, featuring Capt Gillespie contacting his base camp, Buong Brlong, on his radio while 'Yard' strikes burn down a VC hideout. The round, oblong object is a gourd, hollowed out to be used as a primitive canteen, along with another Duckhunter's shirt, standard issue to the CIDG Montagnard strikers.

Above: Model 18 Randall knife with a Solingen, German blade, Randall could not manufacture these knives fast enough for the growing demand, so they had to purchase pre-made blades directly from Solingen. The handle was brass metal and was hard to grip, so common practice was to wrap paracord around the handle, which could later be unwrapped and used for survival purposes. Inside the hollow handle the user typically placed other survival 'goodies', such as snare, dextradine (speed), matches, and fishing hook. The knife came with a heavy leather riveted sheath and a sharpening stone.

Friedrich; John Lau; Paul Umbriaco; Kaiser Bill's; Dave George; John Harlash; Dick Sams (knives); Dick and Barbara Greenberg (living support); Jay Camp; Mike Mecceda; Tom Jones; Bob Chait and Amber Mena (for being so patient with me).





# Pulaski's Legion

Count Casimir Pulaski was a fierce fighter for national freedom, whether it be in his native Poland or for the newly emerging United States of America, but his ambitions were frequently let down by the realities of war, as ROBIN SMITH explains.

Of the many foreign adventurers who fought in the American Revolution, none had such a colourful career or so tragic an end as Count Casimir Pulaski. But although the Polish born aristocrat, dubbed the father of American cavalry, has been commemorated at several locations across the United States — including a handsome statue on the Western Plaza, Washington DC — in the pantheon of American cavalry heroes, Pulaski is overshadowed by names like Light Horse Harry Lee, Custer, Stuart and Sheridan.

Casimir Pulaski's skills as a cavalry leader and his ideals of fighting for liberty, were shaped by the political situation in his native Poland. Dominated by Russia, Austria

and Prussia, 18th Century Poland was a country in turmoil. Foreign Saxon kings sat on the throne and the glory days when Polish might had delivered the coup de grace to Turkish forces besieging Vienna, were long gone. The Polish army had become small and under equipped.

When King Augustus III died in 1763, Catherine the Great of Russia installed her former lover, Stanislas August Poniatowski as Poland's new monarch. The Polish nobility was further enraged when members of the Russian Orthodox church were given the same rights as Roman Catholic Poles.

Casimir Pulaski's father, Josef Pulaski, set about organising an insurrection with Casimir and his two elder brothers. The Pulaskis were lawyers, not professional soldiers, but they gathered up a band of followers and formed a confederation with a military wing, known as the Knights of the Holy Cross, for the fight against the Russians. The knights' list of rules gave specific instructions as to how the latter day crusaders should behave, equip themselves and dress.

'The members will have no correspondence with enemies of the faith or with Catholics who are not pledged to the order. Each sworn knight need have not more than one or two horses, pistols, sword and standard. He will be properly outfitted and will wear on his left side and on his cap the sign of the Holy Cross, according to the old model, in crimson colour. He is also to have with him a high Tartar cap and a green or grey uniform and is to bring no carriage or cart unless he is a commander.'

Casimir Pulaski's baptism of fire came in a clash with Russian cavalry in the spring of 1768 near the Polish village of Podhajele, where after a three hour fight the Knights of the Holy Cross saw the Russians off. Claiming his force numbered 400 men, while the Russians numbered 2,000, Pulaski signed his report of the battle as *guerilla colonel*.

Despite the setback, a short time later, of his force being ambushed by Russian troops, Pulaski grew ambitious. With a force of more than 1,000 men, he occupied the ancient Polish monastery at Berdyczow against the

Russians. But ammunition began to run so low, that his men were forced to shoot lumps of stone and shards of glass out of their cannon. The garrison surrendered and Pulaski was captured but later paroled.

The Pulaski family's continuing fight against the Russians cost them dearly. Josef Pulaski and one of Casimir's brothers were imprisoned, while Casimir's other brother, Franciszek was mortally wounded by a pistol ball during a battle near the Polish town of Orzechow, where Pulaski's forces were surprised by the Russians. Pulaski lost 500 men in the battle and most of his guns and supplies. As a further act of humiliation, Russian Cossacks auctioned off his dead brother's uniform.

There was worse to come. The Pulaski family estates were confiscated and Casimir's mother had to flee in disguise to avoid Russian recrimination. But all this appears not to have dimmed Pulaski's fighting spirit and in 1771 Pulaski achieved legendary status when he defeated a Russian force surrounding the monastery at Czestochowa.

The monastery was a great place of pilgrimage and also doubled as a fortress. Apart from its religious significance, the monastery's other attractions were its impressive selection of cannon, large supplies of gunpowder and a valuable collection of precious stones and gold stored in its vaults. Pulaski moved his forces into the monastery and refused to parley when a flag of truce was sent by the Russians. He threatened to hang any future Russian negotiators, even if they were carrying a white flag.

Before the siege began, Pulaski led a mounted sortie out of the monastery to attack a Russian gun position, but the raid almost cost him his life. The mission proved a success, but on his way back, Pulaski tumbled from his horse catching his spur in his cloak. A Russian soldier was about to strike Pulaski dead as he struggled to get up, but Pulaski managed to fumble for his pistol and shot the Russian down, before making good his escape.

When the siege began, the Russians forced Polish peasants to carry their scaling ladders and bunches of branches to fill the

Left: Ed Dovey's painting shows the colour bearer and a foot soldier of Pulaski's Legion during the early months of 1779. It appears that Pulaski's original intention was to solely raise a corps of lancers for his independent command and a fully armed and equipped lance was paraded in front of General Washington for his approval; but Pulaski's ambitions grew to incorporate Infantry, including a grenadier company. Congress approved the organisation of Pulaski's Legion in resolutions made in March and April 1778 and it quickly became a showcase unit.

The Legion's Infantry were equipped as elite light infantry and both the infantry and cavalry of the Legion were issued with dark blue coats faced red. It also appears that the cavalry wore blue sleeved waistcoats. Both cavalry and infantry wore the same type of cap ornamented with a distinctive six pointed star and a horsehair crest. The helmets were wrapped with a black turban. Sheepskin covered saddles were procured for the cavalry at considerable expense and the Legion identified its mounts with a special I.L. brand, standing for Independent Legion. The infantryman pictured here has also painted these initials on his canteen.

Legend has it that the standard carried by the Legion was made by the Moravian Sisters at Bethlehem, Pennsylvania, and it is now in the collection of the Maryland Historical Society. Measuring 20 inches square, the standard is made out of crimson silk with yellow lettering and a silver or white bullion fringe. The motto around the 'all seeing eye' motif on the front of the flag is NON ALIUS REGIT, 'No Other Governs.'

**Right: Despite his credentials as a Polish military hero, Count Casimir Pulaski never achieved his full potential fighting for a new country. Following his death, Pulaski's Legion was broken up and its men transferred to other units. (Polish Cultural Institute).**



monastery's moat, but the monastery's ancient walls could not be breached. Pulaski's men hurled fireballs and rocks and stones down on the attackers, who became dispirited after their first assault failed.

The Russians abandoned their positions around Czestochowa and Pulaski's staunch defence of the monastery became Poland's greatest military victory since Jan Sobieski and his forces had defeated the Turks besieging Vienna in 1683. Pulaski was congratulated on his victory by the royal courts of Sweden, Prussia, France and England, but his success also meant that many people were jealous of him, among them a French officer and Polish sympathiser called Dumouriez. In one letter he described Pulaski in these less than flattering terms: 'He is an impulsive and haughty young man. More haughty than ambitious'.

Feuds continued to break out in the Polish leadership and despite their reverse at Czestochowa, the Russians were able to regain their powerbase in Poland. Pulaski had another lucky escape from the Russians, during an action near the River Ilza. Wounded in the arm by a lance thrust Pulaski fell into some quicksand, but he was dragged out by one of his men.

One of the more ambitious plans to regain Polish sovereignty was to kidnap Poland's 'imposter king' who had been installed by Catherine the Great. The plot failed and even though Pulaski was said to have played no part, his enemies saw that they could make great political capital out of blaming him for it, especially when it was alleged that there had been plans to murder Poniatowski, to remove him from the Polish throne permanently.

Honourable war was one thing, kidnap and regicide quite another. Pulaski's reputation was unfairly but irreparably damaged in a wave of revulsion that swept across Europe, breaking Pulaski and his long cherished dreams of a free Poland. Pulaski

and what remained of his followers took refuge at Czestochowa, the site of their great victory against the Russians.

But Pulaski increasingly came to feel that the fight was over for the time being and there was nothing to be gained by staying in Poland. His followers might be treated more harshly when the end inevitably came and he was still with them. Pulaski must have also hoped that he might be able to enlist foreign aid for his beleaguered country by going abroad.

In the dead of night, accompanied by a handful of his staff, Pulaski stole away from the fortress and headed for the Silesian border. He was destined never to see Poland again. During his travels, Pulaski applied for a commission in the French army but he was rejected and he went to Turkey to try and raise support against the Russians. But Pulaski's visit unfortunately coincided with a Russian victory over the Turks and he beat a hasty retreat back to France.

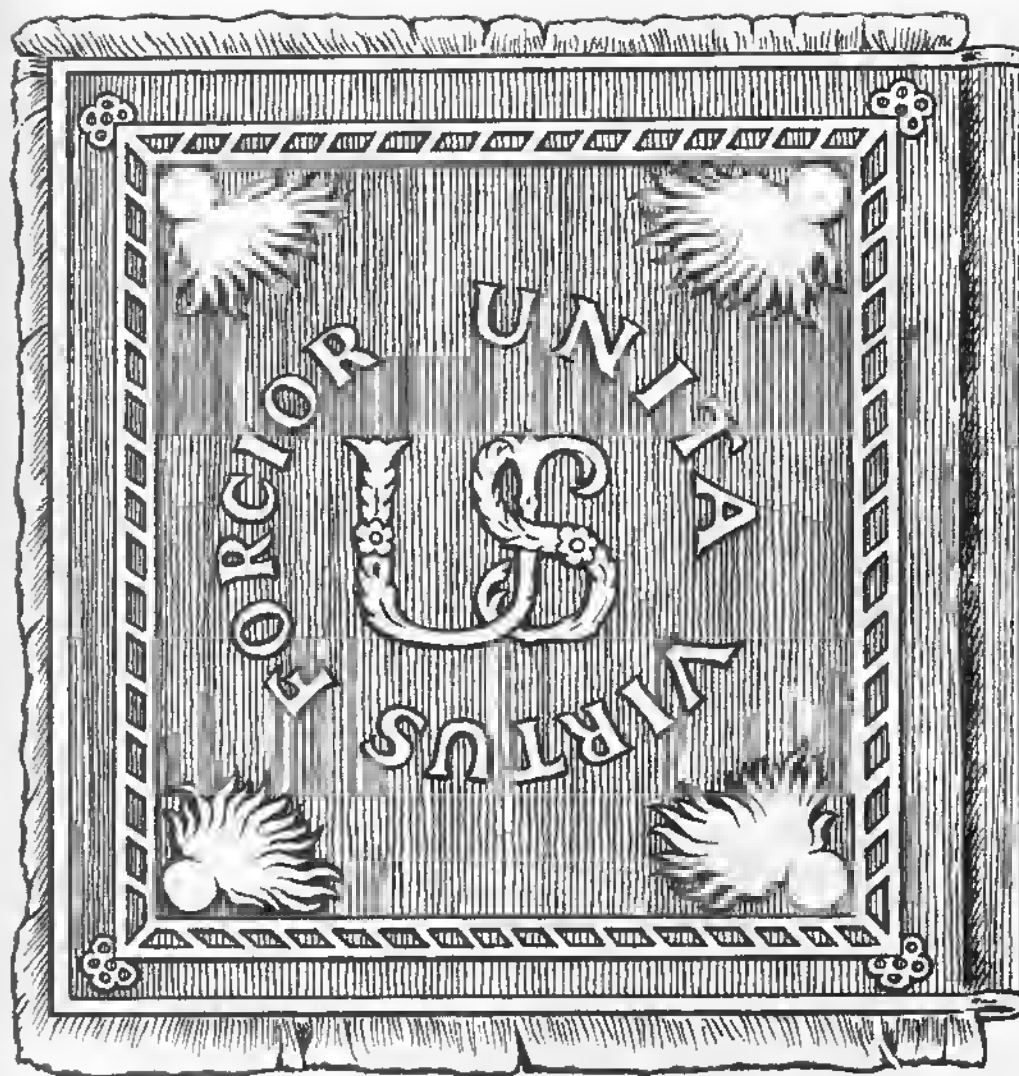
By now, Pulaski was heavily in debt and

his situation was made worse because he had taken up gambling. Pulaski was at the lowest ebb of his career and he was arrested by police in Marseilles and thrown into a debtor's prison. Fortunately, many of Pulaski's former acquaintances found the thought of the former military hero rotting in jail too difficult to bear, and paid off most of his debts. Pulaski was a free man again and able to live modestly.

The news of the outbreak of the American Revolution and that the fledgling Continental Army was anxious to recruit experienced officers, greatly excited Pulaski who saw parallels between the Polish and American struggles for freedom. Pulaski wrote to Silas Deane, the 13 colonies' representative in Paris, but it was another American representative, Benjamin Franklin, who arranged Pulaski's passage to the colonies and wrote a glowing letter of introduction for Pulaski to present to General Washington.

Pulaski asked Washington for a cavalry





Left: Ed Dovey's drawing shows the reverse of the standard carried by Pulaski's Legion. The words surrounding the intertwined US motif are UNITA VIRTUS FORCIOR 'Union Makes Valour Stronger'. The Moravian Sisters misspelled part of the motto. The letter 'C' in the last word should in fact have been a 'T'.

command, but responsibility for issuing commissions had to be approved by Congress and Pulaski was left clicking his heels with impatience. Impressed with Pulaski's credentials, Washington wrote to John Hancock the president of the Continental Congress recommending that Pulaski be put in charge of the four newly raised regiments of light dragoons, but Congress would not be hurried.

Pulaski volunteered to serve as an aide to General Washington and won his American spurs at the Battle of Brandywine in September 1777. The day was going badly for Washington, the right wing of his army was about to break and the centre was in great danger of crumbling.

Pulaski rode up to Washington, asking if he could lead a charge of the general's headquarters cavalry against the British, to stem the tide of advancing redcoats. Washington granted the request and Pulaski led a tiny force of about 30 men, who pitched into the surprised British, hitting them with such force that their attack was delayed and the American withdrawal covered.

Hearing the news of Pulaski's brave charge, Congress was now quick to offer

Pulaski a commission. He was made a Brigadier General and Commander of the Horse. Pulaski at last had a proper position in the Continental Army, but trying to organise and equip the four regiments of light dragoons effectively, would be no easy task. The weakness of the dollar meant it was difficult to purchase mounts. Arms and equipment were also difficult to come by, particularly the specialised equipment that cavalry requires.

As so often happened in Pulaski's career, the glory he achieved would soon be dampened. At the Battle of Germantown in October 1777, Pulaski's understrength cavalry force virtually sat the battle out and this inactivity gave rise to a bizarre story. In 1822, 39 years after the Revolution had ended, Judge William Johnson claimed in his book about Revolutionary War hero Nathaniel Greene, that Washington had found Pulaski asleep in a farmhouse during the Battle of Germantown. The accusation was strenuously denied by Pulaski's former aide, Captain Bentalon and the Marquis de Lafayette — the most famous foreign volunteer to have fought in the Revolution.

Following Germantown, Pulaski made

the best use of the small numbers of cavalry he had at his disposal slogging and skirmishing with the enemy. Pulaski won a small victory at Chestnut Hill in November 1777, but overall these were bleak times for the Americans. The bulk of Washington's forces spent the winter in miserable conditions at Valley Forge, while the cavalry was sent to Trenton and Pulaski set about training his men properly.

The four regiments of cavalry drilled together and it should have been a time when the American dragoons united with their leader, but there was resentment against the Polish aristocrat and his Polish aides. Pulaski's superior attitude upset a lot of his American born personnel who also found his lack of English annoying.

Some officers, such as Thomas Bland who commanded the 1st

Continental Light Dragoons, undoubtedly got along well with Pulaski; and indeed prejudices against him may have been ironed out if it hadn't been for the attitude of Stephen Moylan who commanded the 4th Continental Light Dragoons. The gruff ambitious Irishman felt he had been passed over and was deeply upset that Pulaski had been made Brigadier General of the American cavalry. Moylan was charged with disobeying Pulaski and striking Pulaski's aide John Zielinski.

A court martial decided that Moylan was not guilty but the animosity between Moylan, Zielinski and Pulaski's other Polish officers continued. During a drill session Zielinski 'accidentally' unseated Moylan with a lance and was later reprimanded by General Washington himself. Trouble flared again when a Polish officer tried to arrest two of Moylan's men, who he claimed had been disrespectful to him.

Because of the increasing friction and his continued frustrated efforts to mount, arm and equip his men properly, Pulaski found that he could no longer effectively fulfil his role as commander of America's first regular cavalry units. The time for compromises had

run out and in March 1778 Pulaski resigned from his post. His last action as Brigadier General, had been riding to General Mad Anthony Wayne's assistance, taking part in a spirited action at Haddonsfield, New Jersey, during Wayne's expedition to collect cattle.

Washington accepted Pulaski's resignation and was generous with his compliments when he wrote to him. 'Your intention to resign is founded on reasons which I presume make you think the measure necessary. I can only say that it will always give me pleasure to bear testimony to the zeal and bravery which you have displayed on every occasion.'

Pulaski was still ambitious and put forward the idea of creating an independent corps. Washington and Congress looked favourably on the idea. They appreciated Pulaski's loyal service in the face of a difficult situation and felt that with Pulaski's creation of his own force, he would continue to render valuable service without the prejudice that had so deeply wounded him.

On April 4, 1778, Congress authorised Pulaski to create a legion comprising 68 lancers and 200 infantrymen. Washington gave Pulaski permission to appoint his own officers and Pulaski gathered a strong cadre of fellow Europeans around him. Paul Bentalou, Pulaski's most trusted officer, was appointed as a captain, while John Zielinski the man who had unhorsed Moylan, was made a lieutenant. Colonel Michael Kovats who had served in the armies of Austria, France and Prussia was put in charge of Pulaski's lancers.

Washington stipulated that the rank and file of the cavalry in Pulaski's Legion, should all be native born Americans with 'ties of property and family connections'. As a nucleus for his cavalry, Pulaski was authorised to take two mounted, armed and equipped troopers of his choosing, from each of the four Continental Light Dragoon regiments. This move must have greatly angered Pulaski's old nemesis, Stephen Moylan, who had finally achieved his ambition of commanding the Continental Light Dragoons, following Pulaski's resignation from the post.

Making his headquarters in Baltimore, Pulaski was able to draw on men from the German speaking communities of Maryland and Pennsylvania for his Legion infantry and soldiers who had deserted from Hessian forces were also recruited. Congress had approved that Pulaski could recruit one third of his Legion infantry from deserters; and he took this a step further by also recruiting prisoners of war. General Washington ordered that all such recruits should immediately be returned to confinement.

For a time, Pulaski had ambitions for his Legion at sea as well as on land. An unused ship at anchor in Baltimore harbour, gave

Pulaski the idea that the brig could be turned into a privateer, raiding British shipping with his men serving aboard as marines. But Pulaski's nautical plans were turned down by the ship's owner and the Maryland authorities.

Pulaski's seaborne aspirations may have been rejected, but ironically his Legion's baptism of fire had a nautical flavour. The southern coast of New Jersey was a haven for American privateers who landed supplies of arms and goods vital for the American cause. Annoyed at this thorn in their side, the British sent a force, largely Loyalist, commanded by Captain Patrick Ferguson, the inventor of the Ferguson breech loading rifle.

As part of an American force to stop the advance of any British landings, Pulaski's legion occupied the shoreline around the area of Little Egg Harbour. The British came ashore at the Little Egg Harbour River destroying ships and property. But they were wary of advancing further, until they had scouted out American positions, especially the threat posed by American artillery which they heard was in the area.

Pulaski's Legion should have swept down and smashed the British in one glorious blow, but the reality of the situation was very different. Lieutenant Gustav Juliet, one of the Legion's Hessian deserters, had had a furious row with the commander of the Legion infantry and with five companions deserted.

Juliet led Ferguson and his British troops to the position occupied by the Legion infantry and in a surprise attack more than 40 of Pulaski's foot soldiers were killed. Pulaski and his cavalry were quickly on the scene and the British retired. But with so many of the Legion dead, it was hardly a glorious victory and reinforced General Washington's misgivings about Pulaski's recruitment of Hessian turncoats.

Pulaski rebuilt his battered forces and for a time the Legion served on the New York frontier, guarding against raids by Iroquois Indians and Loyalists. But the dense woodland was not really suitable for the deployment of cavalry and there was little chance for glory.

When the tide of war shifted southwards, Pulaski and his Legion were ordered to Charleston. The city was threatened by a large advancing British force and perhaps the situation reminded Pulaski of the Russian siege at Czestochowa, during his glory days in Poland. Pulaski planned to ambush the British. His cavalry would sting the enemy and then retire, luring the British into fire from the Legion infantry.

At first his scheme worked well, but instead of staying put, the Legion infantry rushed forward and in the confusion a third were slaughtered. Among the dead was Colonel Michael Kovats and John Zielinski was mortally wounded. Carried from the battlefield, Zielinski languished in a Charleston hospital for two months before he died.

Despite the costly battle, Pulaski was praised for his adventurous attack which had delayed the British assault on Charleston and shortly afterwards the city was saved by the timely arrival of American reinforcements. Pulaski served as chief negotiator between American and French forces during plans to relieve the city of Savannah which had become a strong British foothold in the South. The situation offered a chance for fresh glory and again he must have seen parallels with his early days in Poland — but the end of Pulaski's career was drawing near.

During the American and French attack on Savannah, Pulaski was mortally wounded. It has passed into legend and also been commemorated in several pictures, that Pulaski was shot off his horse while leading a cavalry charge, but it seems that Pulaski died in less spectacular circumstances when he was on his way to take control of French forces after their commander, d'Estaing, had been wounded.

Riding across to the French lines, Pulaski was shot in the groin. Gallantly, the British held their fire, while the stricken count was carried from the field. Medical officers from the French army examined Pulaski, but they could do nothing and it was decided to put Pulaski on an American ship the *Wasp*, and take him to Charleston. On October 11, 1779, shortly after the voyage had begun, Pulaski died. He was 32 years old. Because the weather was very humid and there were no means of preserving his body, it was decided to bury Pulaski at sea. He was laid to rest somewhere off the Georgia coast. A fitting end for the cavalry commander who had aspirations to be a marine.

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# Mystery Saddle

The 1902 pattern saddle has had a long and useful life in the British Army, still being used today by the Household Cavalry and the King's Troop Royal Horse Artillery.

PHILIP EDMONDS, a collector and restorer of military saddles, tackles an odd survivor of this classic horse equipment and turns to *MI* readers for their suggestions.

Over the centuries there has been no animal that has aided man in his fight for survival or from victory over his foe as much as the horse. Books often suggest that the military horse, where possible, was looked after and cared for far better than the basic trooper or gunner. An early instruction for the 'would be' cavalryman was that 'The rider must live only for his horse, which is his legs, his safety, his honour and his reward' (*The old cavalry soldier c1800*).

On campaign, however, it was not always possible to maintain even a basic form of maintenance for horses. Bad weather, shortage of adequate food and disease took their toll on our loyal friends often far more than battle itself. Napoleon's retreat from Moscow in 1812 resulted in the loss of no less than 30,000 horses, mainly from cold and starvation. During the Crimean war the bitter winter of 1854 gave the British horses no respite. By December of that year the cavalry division (Light and Heavy Brigades) had been reduced to 200 horses from an original strength of 2000. By January, the 13th Light Dragoons could only muster 12 from 250 that were brought over from England and these could do no more than walk. A correspondent in *The Illustrated London News* of 3rd February 1855 reported: 'I noticed one horse in particular: it was the most pitiful sight I ever beheld. Once upon a day he had been a handsome charger, but now he was the veriest caricature... a skeleton covered with an old hide; no mane, no tail; deep-set ghastly, glaring eyes, and lips shrunk away from the long hungry teeth. You could not tell the colour; his hair was covered with a thick coat of mud which fitted him tight, like a shish-coloured leather jerkin... there he stood, shivering in the sun, up to his knees in mire, tied to what had once been a shrub, but



**Above:** An Officer's MKI 1864 pattern Wood Aitch saddle clearly showing the high spoon cantle bound in brass. This saddle was made by the London company 'SAUTER'. The MKII saddle of 1889 and the MKIII of 1899 both had almost identical spoon cantles, but this feature was discontinued on Officer's saddles with the sealing of the MKIV pattern in 1903. Attached is an unusual style of horseshoe case, though probably not an official pattern. However, much of the Officer's equipment at this time would have been privately purchased.



**Above:** The Officer's MKIV 1903 pattern saddle showing the lower and more rounded cantle. This saddle was made by the London company 'WHIPPY'. Attached is an Officer's 'Off' side horseshoe case dated 1915 and made by 'MARTINS' of Birmingham. It is secured to the saddle by twin straps that buckle onto the two brass 'D' rings situated towards the rear of the seat. The 'Near' side horseshoe case would also have twin attachment straps plus a stitched on toggle for holding the sword, and a side stay strap. Also shown are examples of Officer's type equipment that have the twin securing straps: saddle bag, near side horseshoe case, Household Cavalry horseshoe case and sandwich box with split flask.

now was a bundle of withered, leafless sticks'.

From such an account it may seem that actual battle would be the least of the horses' problems. This was not the case. Out of the 673 that carried their riders into that 'Valley of Death' at Balaclava, 470 were killed, 42 wounded and 43 later put down. It was not only the cavalry horse who was subjected to wanton carnage. The gun teams also had to go where ordered. At the battle of Waterloo,

Captain A C Mercer of 'G' Troop Royal Horse Artillery reported in his journal that at the height of the battle he noticed some of his drivers unharness one of the horses from the rear of the gun position and 'Shoo' it away. He was surprised to see the same horse crowding in amongst the lead horses of another team. He looked down and was sickened. The animal had only half a head. A cannon shot had completely carried away the lower part immediately below the eyes. 'Still





Left: The 1902 pattern saddle with seat removed revealing the webbing. The underside of the seat shows the rear pocket that passes over the spoon cantle. It also shows the two small tabs that are stitched onto the front of the seat on either side of the half moon cut-out. These tabs are laced onto two elmilar tabs that are stitched onto the underside of the webbing. The flap is removed showing the 'V' attachment for the girth. The numnah pad has been removed to show its construction of felt with leather pockets sewn onto either end for securing to the side bar. The rear pocket has a brass loop stitched onto it and the front pocket has the main securing buckle. There is also a small strap end buckle that passes over the side bar close to its centre.

he lived, and seemed conscious of all around, whilst his full, clear eyes seemed to implore us not to chase him from his companions.' Mercer ordered a farrier to put the horse on of his misery which was done with a sword into his heart.



Below left: The standard 'Other Ranks' 1902 pattern saddle. This example was made by 'D MASON & SONS' of Birmingham and is dated 1915. The half moon cut-out at the front of the seat can just be seen. Also shown are examples of OR's equipment that have the single securing strap: Royal Engineers tool bucket, Yeomanry sword holder, Farrier's tool bag, domed instrument case and an OR's horseshoe case with sword frog.

Below: The mystery saddle as first acquired. Though not apparent from the photograph, the leatherwork was very stiff and dry and the true condition of the under seat webbing and tree was only revealed after stripping down.



The development of the British military saddle is perhaps best recorded as from the second half of the 19th century with the start of the List of Changes in the 1860s. At this time the trooper's saddle was very much like the officer's in terms of style and look, but the officer's was of a much better quality. Between the end of the Boer War and the start of the First World War there became a marked difference between the two as standard.

The pattern of the officer's saddle sealed during this time was the MKIV 1903 pattern (LoC 11954), also known as the 'Staff Pattern'. It is similar in appearance to today's civilian saddle, except that it has 'Fans' and 'Burs' plus extra brass 'D' rings and staples. The fans and burs are basically extensions of the twin side bars which protrude beyond the front and back of the seat on either side, with the fans being at the rear. The previous patterns of officers saddles (MK's 1, 2 and 3) all had a high rear arch in their seats, topped with a 'Spoon'. The MKIV saddle no longer had the spoon but this was to be continued with the 'Other Ranks' saddles as will be seen. The seat of the officer's saddle was made using hogskin while the flaps are of plain leather. The removable panels are also of leather and stuffed with white wool flock.

The saddle came in two sizes — large for horses and small for cubs (not over 15 hands). Up until this time this style of saddle

had only been stipulated for Field Marshals, General Officers, Dismounted Officers and Staff Officers. It was also referred to as the 'Hunting Pattern' with fans. From 1903 it became universal for all officers, but was only issued once existing stocks of previous patterns were exhausted. It appears that this style of saddle, though in use for many years, had no real reference except for the terms 'Staff' or 'Hunting' pattern, but from 1903 it was designated MKIV.

The 'Other Ranks' saddle introduced at this time was the 1902 pattern and came in three sizes. In theory this saddle was superseded by the 1912 pattern which had movable joints allowing one size saddle for any size horse. It would be fair to assume that as the 1912 pattern was the last to be sealed, then this is the pattern that should be in use by our mounted soldiers today, but this is not the case. It may well be that both patterns were in production for the First World War and that the 1912 pattern continued for quite a while afterwards, but sometime between then and now it seems to have disappeared from the scene. It is unclear as to exactly what happened with this saddle. Whether the manufacturers found it too difficult or costly to continue producing, or whether the Army found the movable joints too weak for the lifespan expected, is not

known at this time. What is known is that it is the 1902 pattern that has stood the test of time, and is presently in use by The Household Cavalry, The Kings Troop Royal Horse Artillery and until their recent closure, The Military Mounted Police at Aldershot.

### 1902 pattern

The pattern for the 1902 trooper's saddle was sealed in October of that year (LoC 11417). As already stated it came in three sizes (small, medium and large) and was denoted by the letters S M or L on the front of the front arch. The tree of the saddle (solid framework) consists of two beechwood side bars onto which are rivetted the front and rear steel arches. The side bars are 22" in length and also attached in these are brass rollers, one on either side, to take the stirrup leathers. On the front of each side bar is rivetted a heavy brass 'D' ring to take the breast plate straps, or wallet straps.

The front arch is rivetted in an upright position and has two slots run down on either side to take the wallet straps. The rear arch is rivetted at an angle (sloping back) and has a 'Spoon' with an inset single brass roller rivetted to its top. The side bars continue beyond the front arch forming 'Burs' into

which the holsters or wallets rest. They also continue beyond the rear arch forming 'Fans' onto which the rear pack rests in order to protect the horse's back from the weight. Riveted behind and on either side of the rear arch are two large brass staples to take attachment straps. Hanging from the centre of the rear arch is a large brass rectangular loop to take the crupper strap.

Between the front and rear arch, two lengths of webbing are attached by stitching. Across these two lengths are three pieces of webbing whose ends are nailed along the top edge of each side bar. This webbing is to give support to the seat. The next items to be fixed to the side bars are the girth attachment straps. These are in the form of a 'V' though not a true 'V' with each side of equal length as this proved to drag the saddle forward. The rear of these straps is screwed directly to the side bar while the front strap is secured via a buckle stitched onto a leather tab which in turn is screwed to the side bar. The flaps of the saddle are screwed directly onto the side bars close to the top edge.

The final item on the side bars are the pads or numnahs as they are more usually called. They consist of thick felt and run the whole length of the bar with a piece coming down longer at the front. They are secured to the bars by having leather pockets stitched onto the felt at either end. The rear pocket has a brass 'D' ring stitched onto it via a leather tab, and this pocket slips over the end of the fan.

The front pocket has a slot which allows the breast plate/wallet strap 'D' to protrude and also a slit to open the pocket which allows the numnah to be fitted easily. This slit is then closed by a small strap and buckle stitched to the pocket.

Finally we come to the seat of the saddle. This is fitted easily to the tree by means of a large pocket stitched under the rear of the seat which slips over the spoon cantle. The pocket has 'cut outs' which allows the two large brass staples and crupper loop to protrude. The front of the seat has a small half moon shape cut out where it meets the front arch and on either side of this are stitched stout leather flaps which wrap over and under the arch. These flaps butt up against two similar flaps that are sewn to the underside of the webbing. Each flap is then laced to its opposite number and thus the seat is held firmly in place. The half moon cut out gives access to the top of the front arch which is necessary for the attachment of the wallets.

This saddle was intended

to be the first truly universal pattern for all branches of the mounted service including drivers of horse artillery who, previously, had their own patterns. The only alteration to the specifications as described was for the Household Cavalry who have twin brass 'D' rings on the front of the side bars, a supporting strap on either side of the rear arch and twin rollers in the spoon.

It is clear that Officers and Other Ranks each have their own types of equipment, and where this equipment was supposed to be similar there was often a marked difference with regard to quality and features. This was no less the case with saddlery. Other Rank's saddles were made the way they were because they had to be easily serviceable and because of the equipment the trooper's horse had to carry which was different and often a great deal more than that carried by an Officer's horse. One main feature of the 1902 OR's saddle is that there is access to the rear arch on either side where it meets the side bars. This provides a strong stable point for attaching equipment. As such, much of the OR's equipment has a single attachment strap which passes around the arch and is secured with a single buckle. Officers' saddles tend not to give access to their arches. Instead there are usually two 'D' rings secured along the lower edge of each side bar towards the rear of the seat. Officers' equipment is normally attached using twin straps that buckle onto the two 'D' rings.

## Mystery saddle

This brings us onto a saddle that seems to be somewhat of an anomaly. It appears to be a 1902 pattern OR's saddle that has features making it a 'De Luxe' version more suitable for an Officer. It is probable that during the First World War Officers used OR's saddles through necessity, but there does not seem to be any reference to these saddles being specially adapted for Officers.

As is the case with most old saddles when first acquired, this saddle needed a great deal of cleaning and refurbishment in order to aid its preservation and presentability. All 1902 pattern saddles are straight forward enough to 'strip down' though with an old one like this, where the leather is dry and stiff and the screws rusted, it can be tricky and time consuming and much care and attention is required.



Above: The main components of the mystery saddle. Tree with webbing and flaps still attached. Seat with brass square loop at front instead of half moon cut out, and pads constructed mainly of leather instead of felt, with the securing buckle on each of the rear pockets.



Above: The flaps have been removed showing that the front buckle and girth loop were all that remained of the 'V' attachment straps. The webbing was in such a poor condition that it would have to be replaced.

Right: With the webbing removed it was clear to see that the steel arches would require rubbing down and repainting, and the muck and grime of decades cleaned from the side bars.



There were no visible markings and it was hoped that the stripping down would reveal the manufacturer's name and date of manufacture. It was unfortunate that the 'V' attachment for the girth was missing as quite often this information is on the sweat flap part of these straps. All that remained of this attachment was the front buckle and guide loop.

The first major difference between this and a normal 1902 pattern were the pads which were not made of felt. Instead they were constructed of leather hacked with white wool serge and stuffed with horsehair. Their quality was not of that normally associated with OR's saddles since the turn of the century. The pads were secured to the side bars by a strap and buckle on the rear pocket, the front pocket having just a slot to allow the front 'D' ring to protrude. The securing strap on each of the pads was very dry and brittle, consequently a good leather halnt was liberally applied prior to coaxing them through the buckles. Once removed, it was unbelievable how much dirt, dust and grime (plus a few dead spiders) was present between the pads and side bars. A good brushing out was required before more applications of leather halnt were applied to the pads.

Next came the seat, and here was another difference to be noted. There was no half moon cut out at the front. The leather here was complete with a large brass square loop rivetted on where the cut out should have been. This was not a feature that could have been adapted from a standard 1902 seat, it was here from the point of manufacture. This square loop would be more in keeping with the 'D' ring that Officers usually have on the pommel of their saddles.

Removing the seat was another test of patience as the leather lacing was well and truly solid. Once again the leather balm did its work, but only after soaking for 24 hours and a further four hours of gently teasing the thing out of its holes. Once the seat was removed it was clear to see that the webbing was totally worn and perished in places and would need replacing. Also the surfaces of the arches were corroded and would require sanding down and repainting.

The flaps were attached by five screws apiece and only four in total unscrewed intact. The heads of all the rest crumbled due to rust and what remained had to be drilled out. With the flaps removed all that was left on the tree was the webbing and the front buckles for the 'V' attachment. The latter was soon unscrewed and the webbing cut away at the arches where it was stitched, and prised away at the side bars where it was nailed.

Now that the saddle was broken down into its component parts, it was easy to view the remaining features that were out of place. Low down on either side of the rear arch,



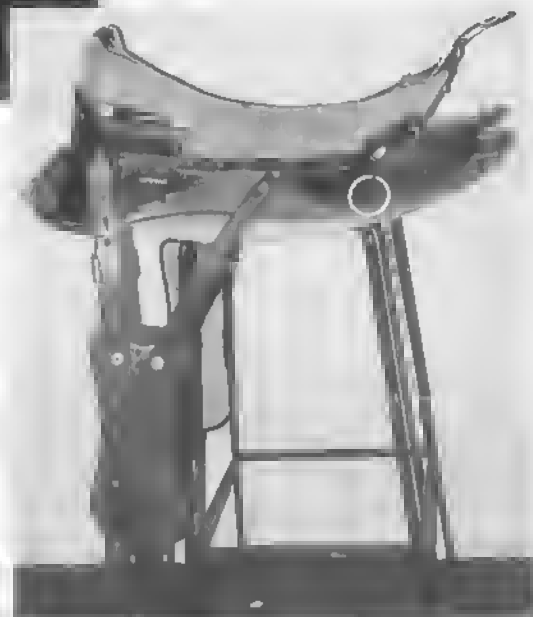
The mystery saddle with all work completed. The leather work has slightly darkened due to cleaning and waxing which was necessary for its preservation. Alongside is a standard 1902 pattern saddle kitted out with: rifle bucket (secured with a single strap passing around the rear arch), mess tin, wallets, and lance bucket on stirrup. At the back is the horseshoe case with canvas water bucket and picket peg strapped to the 1908 pattern sword, which would all be secured to the rear side of the saddle.

holes had been drilled to allow the fitting of a large ring. To the rear of these rings two square brass loops had been rivetted directly onto the fims. These loops protrude through slots in the leather work of the pads when the pads are attached to the side bars. The large ring and the square loop behind it could easily accommodate the buckling on of Officers' twist strap equipment.

Restoring the tree was no real problem. The side bars were rubbed down using a good wood cleaner and wire wool, they did not require re-varnishing. The steel arches were cleaned using emery paper and then a suitable paint for metal was applied. While doing this work, it was convenient to thoroughly examine the tree for any identifying marks. All that could be found was the word 'STEEL' on the top of the spoon followed by the letters 'DS' contained in an oval. The word 'STEEL' was also on the front arch along with the letter 'M' which denoted the size of the saddle. All the brass on the tree was polished in the usual way.

With the work on the tree being completed, it only remained to replace the webbing and as this was a first attempt, the result was adequate. All the leatherwork could now be re-attached. Luckily a new set of straps to replace the missing 'V' attachment for the girth was acquired and these were soon fixed onto the side bars. Following this, the flaps were screwed on, the pads were buckled on and the seat was laced on.

We know that after the First and Second World Wars, there was always 'Army Surplus' that was sold off to the public, and many army saddles, certainly between the wars when mechanisation was taking over from the horse, found their way into civilian use. It may well be that many of these saddles were modified to suit their new life better, but do the extra rings and loops suggest anything other than military? If so, could this saddle have been made to an Officer's own specifications as a private purchase item? The saddle was now finished and could be added to the collection, but the remaining question was, should 'Other Ranks' or 'Officers' equipment to be attached to it? What do you think?•



The finished saddle tree looking decidedly cleaner and fit for action. However, much of this restoration would not be visible once the seat, flaps and pads were put back. The tree is a standard 1902 pattern except for the addition of the large ring on either side of the rear arch and the two square loops rivetted onto each of the fims. The replacement 'V' attachments for the girth have been screwed onto each of the side bars.

All saddles and equipment shown are from the collection of the writer.

## Dedication

I wish to dedicate this article to my good friends: Tim Mills, Master Saddler of the Household Cavalry; Alan Larsen, of English Heritage and 17th Light Dragoons re-enactment; John Morgan, who shares my interest in British Army saddlery. Thank you all for contributing to the knowledge that I desire.

## Sources

1. The quotes used when describing the horse in the 19th century are from *The Horse in War* (David & Charles, 1976) by kind permission of the publishers.
2. Information on saddlery is mainly from *Horses and Saddlery* (J A Allen & Co) by kind permission of the publishers.
3. *List of Changes*, National Army Museum Library.



# Gas Warrior

Although most nations steered clear of using chemical and gas weapons in World War Two, each side prepared for the awful moment if it came.

MARTIN BRAYLEY and ROBERT STEDMAN analyse an example of a protective suit used in the German Army.

For many of the combatant nations involved in World War Two the memory of the suffering caused by gas during the Great War was still vivid. Long shuffling lines of blinded soldiers, and the dreadful coughing of men who would suffer a long and painful death having inhaled the gas. These images led to national leaders being reticent to initiate use of such weapons, although Germany considered their full scale employment in 1943 but were fearful of the retaliatory consequences and decided against the option.

Regardless of any intent, most nations spent some considerable effort on designing and manufacturing anti-gas protection for their troops. An equal, if not greater effort, was spent in training the troops in the correct use of the equipment available to them and demonstrating its effectiveness against known chemical agents and gases.

The greatest problem was protection against blister agents. Ideally, and for guaranteed protection, the soldier needed to be completely covered in an airtight suit impermeable to moisture or vapour and with his own self contained air source. This solution was wholly impractical as it would have been impossible for any soldier to fight or operate weapons in such a suit. It was therefore necessary to balance the degree of protection against the individual's combat role and the acceptable risk to that person. Of necessity the infantry soldier in the line had to accept a higher degree of risk of gas



injury in the same way as he did the risk of injury from any other weapon. The level of protection was therefore considerably greater for troops in the rear who had no immediate need to operate their personal weapons, or undertake offensive combat, than it was for front line troops.

## The light protective suite 1939

The light protective suit first appeared as the 1937 model with a second upgraded version being issued as the 1939 model. The 39 suit was introduced by Heeresmitteilungen 41 (Army Orders), No 638 of June 1941.

The light suits were intended for issue to

supporting units, rather than the front line combatants who would have had to rely on the anti-gas cape (*Gasplane*) as their first means of defence. The very nature of their role made the suit a more practical alternative to the gas cape and offered a considerably greater degree of protection. Generally they could have expected some warning of intended use of gas, allowing time to don the suit, and by comparison to front line troops their employment would have been less energetic.

The suit did have some shortcomings, of necessity it was impermeable to moisture and if used for long periods the user would perspire heavily leading to the

(continued p42)



Above: This Wehrmacht Gefreiter, wearing the M36 field uniform, carries the gas suit, in its bag, slung from the shoulder in the prescribed manner as are the *gasmaske* and *gasplane* (cape) which are worn at the rear of the belt. He carries all of the items necessary for protection against chemical agents.



Right: Once the leggings were secured the next item to be drawn from the bag was the *Gashose* (overtrousers), a pair of rather voluminous shorts designed to fit over, and protect, any field equipment worn on the *Koppai* (belt). The waist is fitted with a drawcord and the trouser cuffs with tie tapes, providing a gastight seal with no access to equipment worn beneath.

The gasmask cape was originally intended to be worn at the chest attached to the strap of the *Tragebuche für Gasmaske* (gas mask canister). However this method was found to be unpopular with the troops who frequently attached it to the gas mask canister either with spare *Mantelreimen* (leather pack straps) or rubber bands cut from tyre inner tubes. Both of these methods could damage the fragile cape and were therefore officially forbidden but universally used. In December 1942 a method of attaching the cape to the canister, using the canister straps, was devised. This was detailed in *Heeresmittellungen 42, no.1130*. (Army Orders).

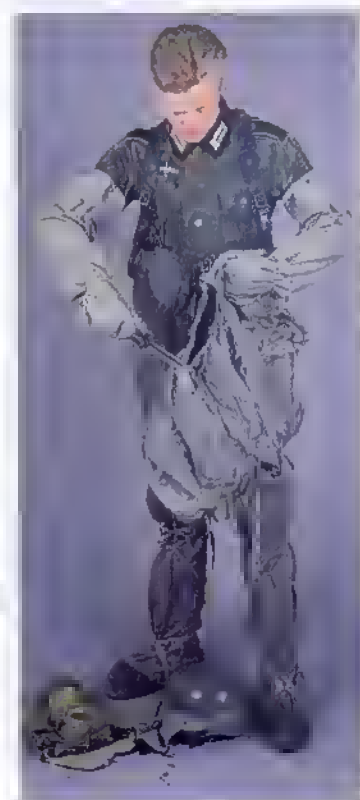


Above: Following the procedure for donning the gas suit the gasmask has been removed from its case and placed at the Gefreiter's feet alongside the opened *Tragetasche* (bag). The first items drawn from the bag are the *Beinlinge* (leggings) having a rubber sole and fabric upper. These are pulled on over the boots and secured using the tie tapes at ankle and calf, the top being supported by a tape passing over the *Patronentasche* (ammo pouches). The leg sections were identical with no specific left or right foot, allowing each one to fit either leg.

Below: To cover the torso area a second pair of *Gashose* was essential although they do not appear to have been issued as part of a single kit. To convert them to use on the upper body a neck opening had to be cut in the crotch area, here using a *Seitengewehr S84/98* (bayonet 84/98) and they were then pulled on like a shirt. The waist drawstring was secured and the cuff tapes were fastened around the upper arm.



Above: Having laid the helmet, fitted with its neckguard, at his feet, the next task is to pull on the *Gashandschuhe* (gloves). These long gloves have a hand section in the form of a mitten with separate thumb and trigger finger. They are secured at the wrist by a length of waxed paper cord and at the shoulder by cloth tapes, which are tied beneath the *Schulterklappen* (shoulder straps).



Right: Here the *Nackengasschutz* (neck protector) is being attached to the M40 *Stahlhelm* (steel helmet). From this point on the assistance of a comrade, if available, was helpful, if not essential in ensuring correct fitting of the suit.



Above: The most essential item of protective clothing was the gasmask. This example is the *Gasmask 30* (Gasmask model 1930) with cloth covered rubber facepiece, the M38 mask being recognisable by its plain rubber facepiece, although both patterns continued in production throughout the war. This 1943 dated mask has its fittings painted in the universal *Dunkelgelb* (dark tan) introduced in the same year. The filter used here is the *Filter einsatz M42* (FE42) the body of which is deeper than the preceding models (FE37 & 41).



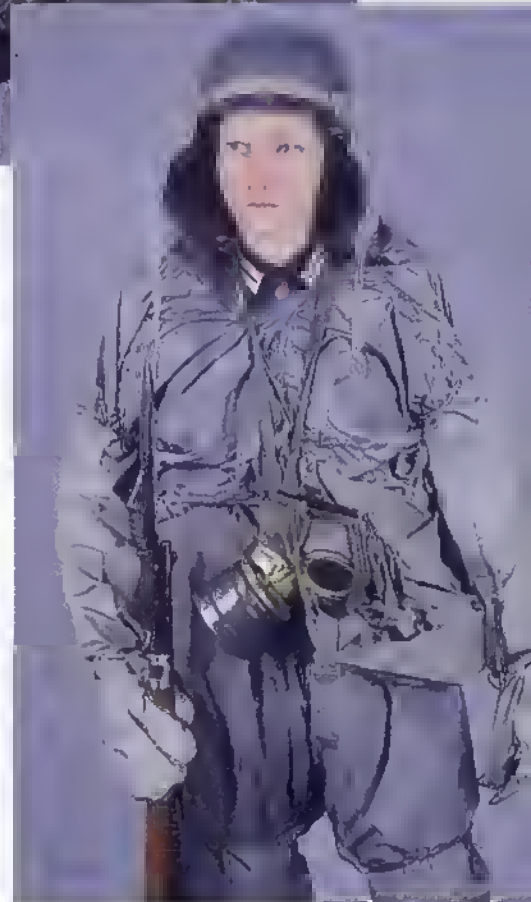
Above: Detail of the coverage afforded by the use of two pairs of *Gashose*. The cut neck area was a weak point and it stressed could tear further. What would at first seem to be a good seal at the waist was far from such, the upper and lower halves readily separating with any body movement thus exposing the waistline to contamination.



The neck protector fitted to the helmet was a poor design inadequate for its intended task. The single pair of tie tapes secured beneath the chin left the protector loose and gaping around the neck, leading to possible contamination if moving forward through vapour clouds. The retaining strap fitted around the helmet was also a point of weakness, liquid agents could seep beneath the cloth strap — running down the inside of the protector to contaminate the wearer's head.

Above right: Fully kitted out for operations in a contaminated environment, our *Gefreiter* presents a rather bizarre image. Only the minimum of essential equipment remains exposed, in this case the *Karabiner 98k* (Short carbine M98) and the *Schanzzeug* (E-tool), with other items such as ammunition being carried in the *tragetasche*.

Right: When not in actual use the gasmask could be suspended from its integral *Tragband* (carrying strap), this allowed its carriage in a ready use position. In this dress the bayonet was often carried fixed to the rifle as it would otherwise be inaccessible beneath the *Gashose*, it was an essential item when removing the suit which had to be cut away from the wearer if it was contaminated. The suit would then be destroyed and other items of kit decontaminated where possible.





uniform and underclothing becoming damp. In cold climates such as the Russian front this in itself could be life threatening, lowering the body temperature and rapidly leading to hypothermia. In tropical regions, or the warmth of a Russian summer, the loss of body fluid through perspiration would be excessive and could easily lead to severe dehydration unless an adequate supply of drinking water was available, and could be consumed. The issue *Feldflasche 31* (M1931 canteen) with its 0.8 lit capacity would have been wholly inadequate. Even without extremes of temperature the wearer would readily become exhausted through the sheer effort required to complete even simple tasks, however it was the best protection that was available to the German soldier at that time. A heavy protective suit also existed but was intended only for issue to specialised troops such as those engaged in decontamination or offensive use of contaminants.

The light protective suit was carried in its own bag (*Tragtasche*) manufactured in the same fabric as the suit itself, a lightweight grey/green material coated on one side with synthetic rubber, it was closed with a flap and two metal buttons and had a tape shoulder strap attached to metal eyelets at either upper corner. The bag contained the overtrousers (*Leichte Gashose*), gloves (*Leichte Gashandschuhe*), knee boots (*Beinlinge*), and neck shield (*Nackengasschutz*). For full protection a second pair of overtrousers were required, a hole was cut in the crotch and they were donned as a jacket with the legs used as sleeves. Two patterns of overtrousers exist, one having a bib front (*Brustlatz*) and the other, later pattern, being in the form of rather large shorts. A woven fabric belt was also supplied, this could be used to carry essential belt order kit with other equipment being worn beneath the suit or carried in the empty *Tragtasche*.

After operational use the suit would be cut off and destroyed as would other contaminated items that could not easily be cleaned. Leather and fabric would absorb contaminants and would probably need to be destroyed after use. Its exposed use was therefore limited to the minimum of essential items.

#### Use of Gas

There is a widely accepted misconception in the West that poison gases were never used during the course of the Second World War, however there is much evidence to the contrary. Although no combatant nation engaged in strategic battlefield use of any chemical agents there is no doubt that isolated use did occur, particularly amongst the Axis forces.

Must, if not all, of the major nations engaged in hostilities during WWII had

### TABLE OF CHEMICAL AGENTS

#### CASUALTY AGENTS

Lung Irritants Chlorine Phosgene Chlorpicrin	Gaseous vapour causing eye, nose and throat irritation, coughing, choking, nausea
---	---

The service issue gas mask provides adequate protection from these chemical agents.

Vesicants Mustard Lewisite Ethyl Dichlorarsine Nitrogen Mustard Hydrogen Cyanide.	Liquid or spray causing eye and nose irritation. Itching and/or burning sensation to skin.
--	--

The gas mask alone is insufficient as these agents act on exposed skin, therefore full protective clothing is necessary if operating in areas contaminated with any of the above chemicals.

#### HARASSING AGENTS

Lacrimators (Tear Gases) Chloracetophenone Chloracetophenone/Chlorpicrin Brombenzyl Cyanide	Lacrimators cause intense irritation to moist areas of the body, particularly the eyes and areas damp with perspiration.
--	--

Irritant Smoke Adamsine Diphenyl Chlorarsine	Irritant smoke will cause headaches, nausea, sneezing and depression.
--	---

Harassing agents cause temporary discomfort, the service gas mask is sufficient to prevent it affecting the individual.

There were varied methods of delivery of war gases and chemicals, and the range at which they could be used, amongst the more common were:

Offensive hand grenades	For short range use
Infantry type and heavy mortars	Up to 6,000 yards
Rockets	In excess of 6,000 yards.
Gas shell	Range limited only by the gun in use.
Aerial spray	Limited only by the type of aircraft.
Aerial bombs	(as above).
Generators	Dependent on wind speed and direction.

considerable quantities of gas and other chemical agents stockpiled for retaliatory, or offensive use. Intelligence reports for July 1943 estimated that the Germans had at least 250,000 tons of gas stored east of the Rhine, including a deadly toxin named *Tabun*.

**Axis:** The Japanese Army's use of Chemical and Biological agents against the Chinese in Manchuria is well documented, as is the use of allied POWs in the testing of such weapons. Recent battle-field excavations in Russia have unearthed the remains of many German gas suits just outside the village of Karmanova, 1 Km from the Vaznza river, at Rjhev — 200 Km from Moscow. Karmanova is situated within a 40 Km from fought over during 1942/43. Numerous glass gas bombs were

also found, though this gas was believed to have been of an irritant rather than toxic variety.

Poison gasses are known to have been used by Waffen SS units when clearing Red Army defenders, and possibly a few civilians, who were entrenched in the catacombs of Adzhemoshkai, Kerch, in the Crimea during 1942, and also in Odessa during the same year. It is also believed to have been employed against the Polish Home Army in Warsaw.

The Allied advance through Italy unearthed vast quantities of Chemicals, in particular a mix of 50% Mustard gas and 50% Phenyl Dichlorarsine. It was believed that this was produced by the Italians.

**Allied:** Not surprisingly there is no available evidence to suggest that any

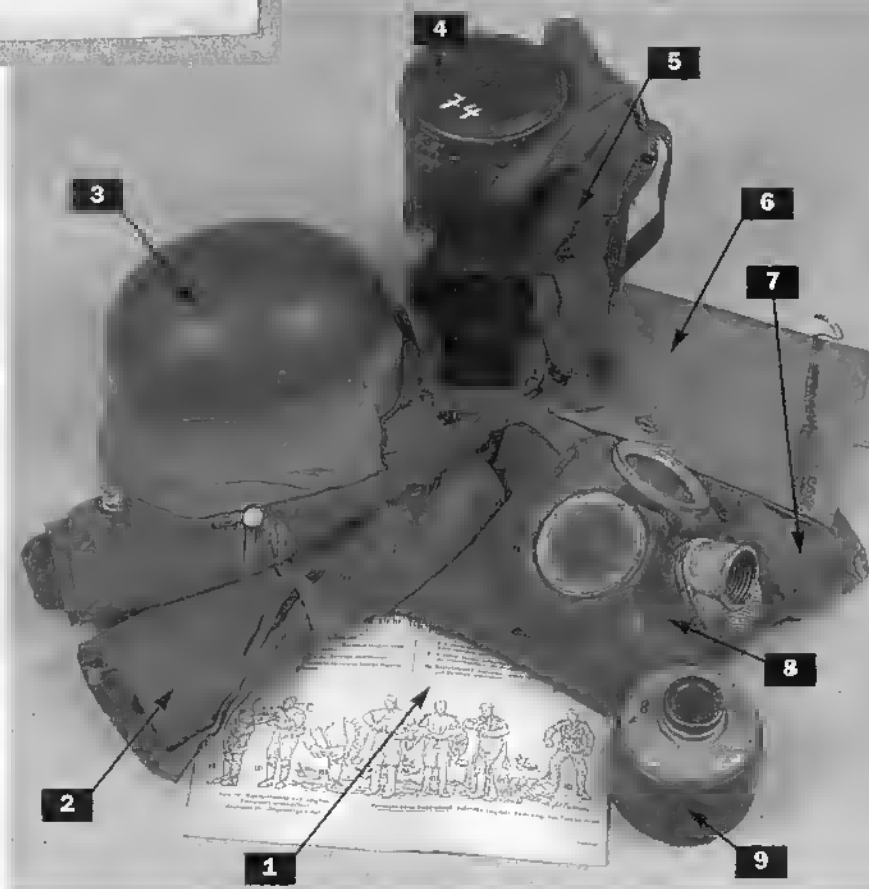


Left: The simple to follow instruction sheet for the *Leichtes Gasbkleidung 39* was well illustrated with a step by step guide to donning the suit. A copy was issued with each suit and carried in the *tragetasche*, this particular example being the edition of 1 April 1942.

Below: *Leichtes Gasbkleidung 39* and associated items. 1. The reverse of the instruction sheet shows the correct method of removing a contaminated suit using a bayonet to cut it away. 2. The *beinlinge* rolled and secured for packing, note the wooden toggle at the end of each tie. 3. *M40 Stahlhelm* with *nackengasschutz*. 4. *M1941 Tragebuche für gasmaske* [5] *Gasplanetasche* attached. 6. *Leichte Gashandschne*. 7. *Tragetasche*. 8. *Gasmaske 38*. 9. *Filter Einsatz M42*. 10. *Leichte Gashose*.



A disposable fabric belt was available, for use by those personnel who required one, for the carriage of additional equipment that would not fit in the *tragetasche*. Also shown in this picture is a marker flag, which, along with lengths of yellow tape, was used by gas sentries to mark contaminated areas.



Allied nation employed gas or chemical weapons during WWII. There were most certainly large stockpiles in all operational theatres, supposedly only for retaliatory use. The discovery of chemical agents in the Italian theatre led ultimately to the single greatest loss of life from gas during WWII.

In September 1943 the Whitehouse authorised storage of Mustard gas in the area of Bari in southern Italy, this was a direct consequence of the discovery of the Axis stockpiles. On the 2nd December a convoy, including the US liberty ship *John Harvey*, arrived at Bari harbour. The *John Harvey* was mined at the most distant

berth, hardly surprising when one considers that its highly secret cargo included 2000 mustard bombs.

By an unfortunate twist of fate the Germans had selected Bari for a massed aerial bombardment, an assault which commenced at 19.35 on the same day that the convoy had arrived. The harbour was a prime target with over 30 vessels moored there. The *John Harvey* was hit early in the raid, although with little serious damage. Unfortunately a direct hit on the nearby *John L. Motley* caused it to blow up, and in a sympathetic explosion the *John Harvey* also went up, scattering its deadly cargo over a large area.

There were over 600 gas casualties amongst the Allied seamen, of these 100 died. Total casualty figures are unknown, particularly amongst the civilian population, although it is known that at least 300 Italians died whilst sheltering from the raid in a tunnel. Such was the secrecy under which the mustard gas had been shipped it was some time before the medical authorities realised what they were dealing with, leading to increased suffering and unnecessary casualties. This unfortunate incident was effectively concealed for many years, despite the large number of people that had been present in Bari at the time of the raid.

# From Normandy to the Gulf

First devised during the Second World War, the Sterling Sub Machine Gun developed into a highly successful close combat weapon, even seeing use during the Gulf War.

STEPHEN BULL tells the story of its development and performance in battle.

The originator of the sub machine gun later known as the 'Sterling' was George William Patchett, a native of Nottingham, and one time motor cycle speed record holder. Prior to World War Two, Patchett had worked for Fabrique Nationale arms in Belgium, and for Janacek arms in Czechoslovakia, from whence he escaped back to Britain when the international situation deteriorated. In England he worked on the prototype of a sub machine gun intended to be both more effective and 'user friendly' than the amazingly crude, yet outstandingly successful Sten gun.

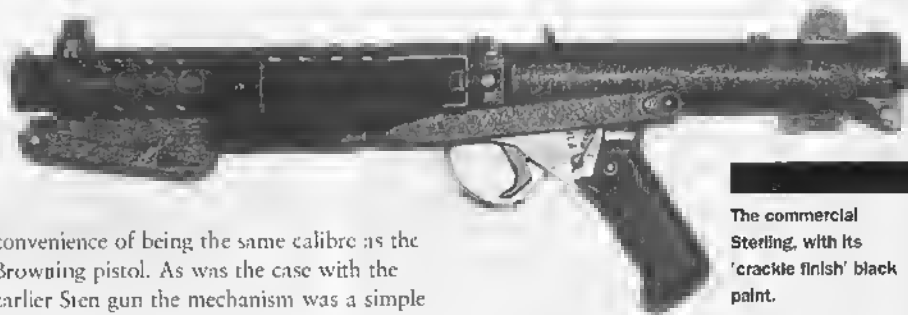
By 1943, Patchett had produced a working model, and in January 1944 a batch of 20 of his experimental guns was ordered for government trials. Like the Sten the new weapon had the advantage of using a 9mm round, which allowed enemy ammunition to be used, and it would later have the

convenience of being the same calibre as the Browning pistol. As was the case with the earlier Sten gun the mechanism was a simple 'blow back'. A folding bayonet was patented to go with the new 'carbine' that March, but in June 1944 a number of these 'Patchetts' were fitted with 'No 5' bayonets. It is even thought that a handful of weapons found their way to Normandy for trials with the army. The new gun worked, but with millions of Sten guns already produced and the war likely to draw to a conclusion before re-

equipment could be completed the Patchett was not adopted. It was not until 1949, when a contest was organised to find a successor to the Sten, that George Patchett got a second chance. Final test trials at Pendine in Wales then declared the latest version of his gun superior to a rival Birmingham Small Arms

design. Troop trials were held in 1951 and the British Army adopted the 'Submachine Gun, L2A1' in 1953. Amongst its novel features, remarkable at the time, was the fact that its bolt cocking handle and block bolt could be used as stripping tools.

Patchett had been working with the armaments section of Sterling Cable and Wireless of Rainham Road South,



The commercial Sterling, with its 'crackle finish' black paint.



Left: A somewhat melodramatic pose against the desert sun, showing the use of the Sterling 'SMG' in the Gulf, 1991.





**Left:** Prime Minister John Major meets the troops in the Gulf, 1991. Though the Infantry had been issued with the new rifle some other arms were still using the 'SMG' in numbers, as is depicted here. Note also the desert camouflage uniform and the use of brassards on the right shoulder for badges including the famous 'Desert Rat' formation sign. (IWM).

**Below:** A museum volunteer cautiously demonstrates the folding stock mechanism of the Sterling. (National Museums and Galleries on Merseyside).



**Left:** The commercial model Sterling, seen here with stock folded and a magazine ready to load.



Dagenham; and it was expected that a sizable order would be forthcoming for the company. The War Office however thought that the Sterling company was too small to fulfill the necessarily huge contract, and instead began to produce the 'SMG', as they preferred to call it, at the Royal Ordnance Factory, at Fazakerley, Liverpool. Neither Patchett, nor Sir Arnold Braithwaite MP, owner of Sterling, were amused, and the MOD was later sued. The case was lengthy, especially since the Ministry contended that the number of guns made was an 'official secret' but eventually Patchett won the case. In 1966 he was granted £116,975 compensation, a considerable fortune at that date: he resigned from Sterling, and went to live in the South of France. He died there twelve years later.

#### Production

The original British army 'L2A1' was to have but a brief period of production. By 1955 the

first model was replaced with the 'L2A2', which featured a forward finger guard, a strengthened butt, and bolt modifications. This itself was superseded by the 'L2A3' in 1956. In this, the commonest variant, the folding spike was replaced with a boss and stud for a knife bayonet, the sights were modified, and the butt was again redesigned as a stamping. Although production was now in full swing the Sterling and the Sten were to coexist for many years, and as late as 1968 the official 'SMG' manual would include a section on the Sten gun.

Meanwhile, Sterling had marketed its gun around the world with considerable success. By the mid 1980s, 14 countries would have the Sterling as their main, or only, sub machine gun. Apart from Britain these were — Barbados, Canada, Dubai, Ghana, India, Jamaica, Lebanon, Malawi, Malaysia, Nepal, Oman, Singapore, and Tunisia. More than 50 other countries placed lesser orders: these

included a tiny batch for the prison service of the Seychelles; and, perhaps more ominously, an order for the government of Argentina. In the case of Canada and India there were agreements to manufacture under license. About 30,000 Canadian Sterlings were produced, and these were known as the 'C1'. The Indian agreement, though potentially more lucrative, was more fraught, since an initial order of 50,000 had its export license revoked because of the India-Pakistan war. Eventually this consignment was purchased by the British MOD, and stored, but their presence served to depress the market for the Sterling for some time. In the end India did produce its own Sterling, under the title 'SAF' carbine and it is likely that more were made here than anywhere else, a production figure of 1,000,000 being sometimes quoted. 'Commercial' Sterlings, produced for foreign or private orders, can normally be distinguished from the British army L2A3 by

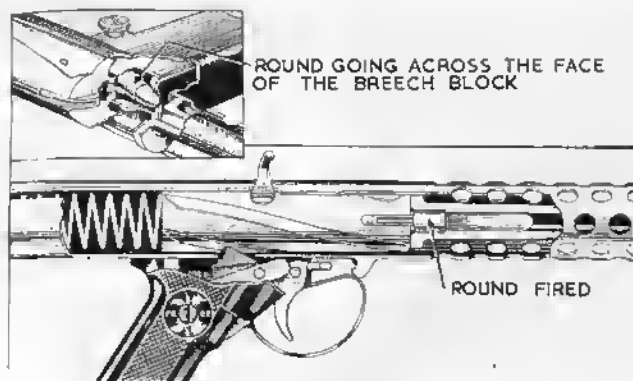


Fig. 18.—Mechanism—the breech block going forward

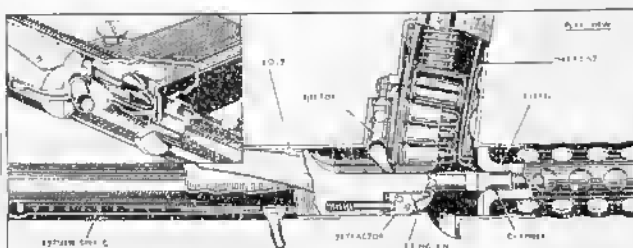


Fig 19.—Mechanism—the breech block going back

the fact that the 'Commercial' has a 'crackle finish' black paint.

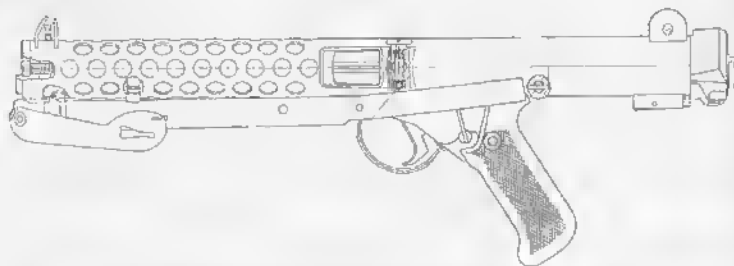
#### Other Variants

The main variations from the basic Sterling concept are the sound moderated, and semi automatic only models. The former, known to the company as the 'Sterling Patchett Mk 3 Silenced', was adopted by British forces in 1976, as the 'L34A1'. Recognisable by its greater overall length, and lack of perforations in the outer barrel jacket, the L34A1 is quietened by a series of holes in the barrel which allow gas to escape into a spiral diffuser sleeve. This is effective in terms of muffling the noise but does lead to a 20% drop in muzzle velocity. Probably the most famous, or infamous, appearance of the 'silenced' Sterling was in 1982 in the hands of Argentine naval commandos during the seizure of the Falklands.

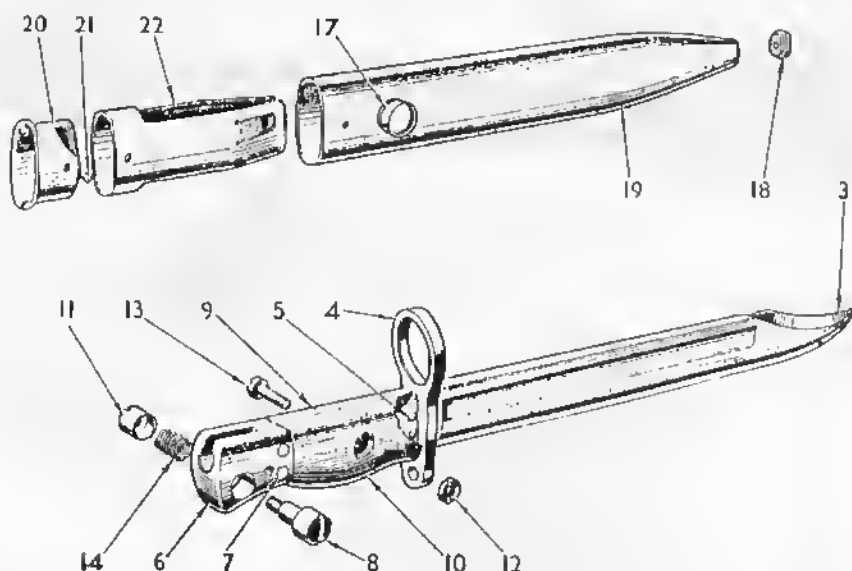
Sterlings capable of semi automatic fire only have been produced for two main purchasers, the police, and the American domestic market. In law enforcement the single shot weapon has proved useful as more accurate than a pistol over greater ranges, without the attendant danger to bystanders posed by a full automatic weapon. The police model is known as the 'Sterling Police Carbine Mark 4'. The American civil model has two further alterations to conform to various US state regulations: a longer barrel; and a mechanism so designed that it is difficult, if not impossible, to convert for full automatic fire. One other interesting, if limited, variant is the so called 'Para Pistol', more properly designated the 'Mark 7 Sterling Paratrooper's Pistol'. This is, to all intents and purposes, a sawn off version, with a barrel only 89mm long. It was produced for use in confined spaces, and was a competitor to the smaller Uzi and Ingram guns. It was itself available in four slightly different models, but never achieved the sales of the Israeli or

Left: The mechanism of the Sterling 'SMG' as depicted in the British army manual c. 1955.

Below: Line drawing of the SMG 'L2A4'; a 1956 conversion of the Fazakerley made weapon which acted as a pilot for the Canadian production.



Below: The construction of the bayonet and scabbard 'No 5 Mk 1', for the L2A3 'SMG'. Parts 17 to 20 are the scabbard and mouthpiece; parts 3 to 14 the bayonet. Note the cross piece with large aperture ring to fit the weapon (4) and the spring locking catch made up of the small parts (8, 11, and 14).



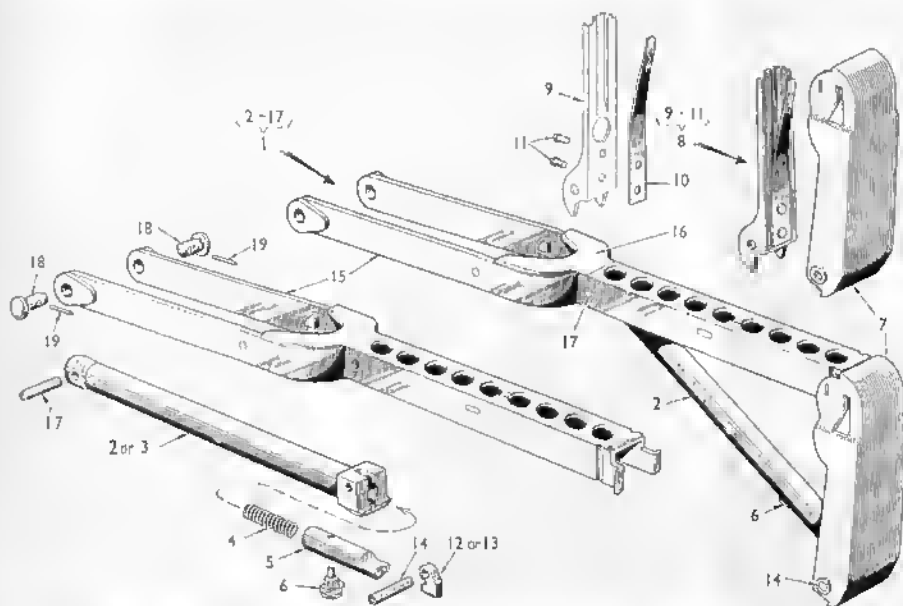
American guns.

#### Training and Use

As a general issue alongside the Self Loading Rifle the Sterling fulfilled a similar role to that previously covered by the Sten. Sights could be set at 100 or 200 yards, but as one instructor pointed out, 'rarely is the gun used to fire beyond 100 to 150 yards. It is, primarily, a close quarter weapon in which role it is extremely good'. The Sterling was also noted for its reliability and durability.

Standard British military training began with description and stripping, although the caution was added that stripping causes wear, and should not therefore be indulged too frequently. One dodge during 'dry' firing, without ammunition, was to place a piece of folded '4 x 2' in the breech to prevent damage to the mechanism. Left handers were taught to fire

right handed, and if they persistently failed courses, were given other weapons to use. Safety was particularly stressed, since, being short barreled, it was an easy weapon to point the wrong way, and being fully automatic could cause considerable mayhem. As Sergeant R.C. Sweeting, a weapons instructor with the Prince of Wales' Own Regiment of Yorkshire, recommended, 'Always coach from the rear of the firer looking over his left shoulder'. The firer was not to turn round, nor was the instructor to come up to the firer until cleared, or the gun unloaded for inspection. The SMG was not normally carried loaded: when it had to be the safety catch was set at 'S' with the breech block in the forward position. There were particular injunctions against dropping or kicking over Sterlings inside vehicles. Once cocked a really hard bang could sometimes set the weapon off.



Above: Details of the folding butt construction of the L2A3. The main strut (15) folds out and locks, the butt plate (7) is held in place by a smaller butt assembly strut (2).

The three main methods of carriage were at 'the rail'; with the sling over the shoulder; or in front with the sling around the neck, depending on the degree of alertness required. Firing could be conducted in one of four ways, but as usual in British training the emphasis was on accuracy and economy of fire. As the manual put it:

- The normal way to fire a SMG is a quick aimed shot or number of shots from the right shoulder with the safety catch at 'R'.
- If you have not time to aim, shoot by sense of direction.
- Only fire bursts from the shoulder at targets such as a group of enemy at very close range if possibly at night.
- You can also fire from the waist, but only do so at point blank range in an emergency and never if you have time to shoot from the shoulder.

Ideally firing was carried out, if not prone, then standing still, and leaning slightly forward. Having fired, trainees not in cover were taught to move quickly to it.

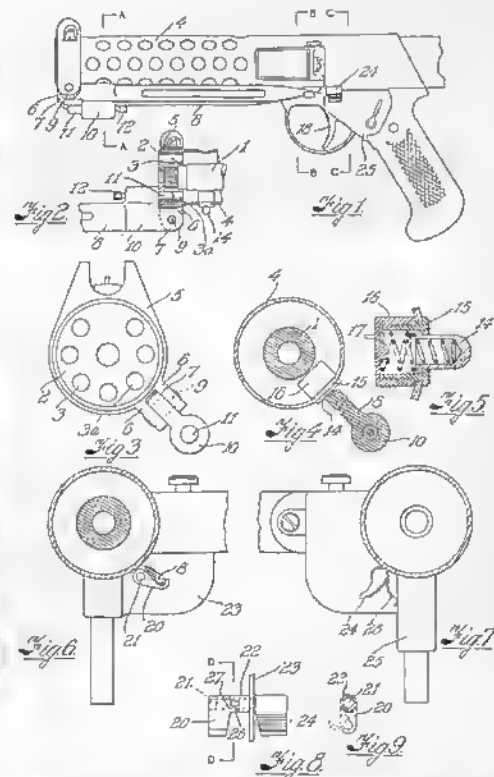
Initial training was on a 25 yard range against a target but once the recruit was competent it was recommended that more imaginative methods be employed. One such was the employment of a 'lane' within an established range along which a recruit would progress, firing, advancing, and taking cover. House clearance could be practised against straw dummies, although live firing would not normally be permitted in an enclosed space. The L2A3 was fitted with a No5 knife bayonet, but even the official manual admitted that its use was a desperate measure: 'There is a knife bayonet, and when it is fixed you can use it like a bayonet on a rifle; but the SMG is a bit short for bayonet fighting, so only use it when you need to be quiet, or when you are fighting at

close quarters and the gun will not fire.'

### The End of the Sterling?

By 1980, the future of the Sterling was already in doubt. The decision for the British army to adopt the short 'Bull Pup', SA 80 'Individual Weapon', which was full automatic capable, made it unlikely that many true sub machine guns would be necessary in future. At the time it appeared that the Falklands might be the last real test of the Sterling, but there, given the openness of much of the terrain, it did not see as much use as the SLR and General Purpose Machine Gun. There was also some discussion as to whether the side mounted magazine of the Sterling was an advantage or disadvantage. Some SAS personnel claimed that it was a drawback in getting through windows and confined spaces, and drill sergeants tended to concur that it was unsatisfactory, but only because it was difficult to make evolutions with the Sterling look elegant on the parade ground. Fortunately or unfortunately the practical counter arguments that you could go prone very easily with a side magazine, and that there would soon be tens of thousands of SLRs which could at very little expense be converted into 'drill purpose' weapons for ceremony, were largely ignored.

In 1987 the issue of SMGs was limited largely to 'drivers and technicians', and about the same time the Sterling company was bought out by Royal Ordnance. Production of the Sterling ceased. As Royal Ordnance was developing links with Heckler and Koch increasing numbers of HK weapons were introduced, as for example to the Police and the SAS. Nonetheless the Sterling saw use in the Gulf, and it is likely to be sometime yet before the British army is entirely devoid of the old 'SMG'.



Above: The G.W. Patchett and Sterling Engineering patent of 13 March 1944 concerning the folding bayonet. The similarity with the post war 'SMG' is already apparent.

### L2A3 'Sterling' SMG: Basic Data

Cartridge	9mm parabellum
Magazine	34 round box
Weight empty	2.72 Kg.
Length, stock extended	690mm.
Length, folded	483mm.
Muzzle velocity	390 metres per sec.
Theoretical rate of fire	550 rounds per minute

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The author is most grateful to Herbert Woodend and Simon Jones for their help in the preparation of this article.

# Militaria

The art of estimating prices for items in an auction sale is a subtle one. It is, of course, usually based on the prices achieved by similar objects in previous sales. Even this calls for some judgement for no two objects are ever identical. There may be subtle differences that will affect the prices, either up or down. Then the question of when the previous sale took place is important. If the sale on which the figure is based took place a year ago the question of what has happened since has to be considered. In collecting, as in so many other fields, there are fluctuations. Certain subjects vary in popularity and this will affect price. A TV series, a film, a book can all stimulate an interest and this can be reflected in demand for a time but when the interest wanes the prices will fall. The condition of the two items needs to be considered for an object with no damage or wear is obviously likely to reach a higher figure. Taking all these factors into consideration a reasonable estimate is arrived at and for most objects that is sufficient. Problems arise when the object is unusual for then one does not have similar objects to guide the estimate. Knowledge of the market comes into play and the experienced cataloguer often develops a kind of sixth sense which will probably come up with a realistic figure.

Even when one is reasonably sure that the estimated figure is about right still more thought is required. This price may well be the price at which the lot may be expected, with reasonable certainty, to sell. The figure in the catalogue may well be slightly lower at the bottom end. Too high an estimate can deter potential bidders. Suggest a very high figure and there will be people who decide that they can not afford that price and just not bid. Pitch the figure a little lower and there is often the hope that the lot might just go for that price and it is worth trying.

There is however a danger that auction fever can, at this point, take over an incautious bidder. When the price has just passed the expected figure there comes a feeling that one more bid will do and it is mine. Unfortunately one more bid can lead to another and another and unless the bidder has set a top figure and sticks to it the final hammer price can come as a nasty shock.

There was a sale in Hove in late September when the collection of a founder member of the Arms and Armour Society was auctioned. This was a mixed bag with swords, armour, antique pistols and books. The estimates given were by current standards very low. A Turban helmet was estimated at £300 and it sold for £5,500 but all the dealers knew its true value. There were other estimates that were similarly low but no doubt there were a number of interested parties who went along in the hope that they might, in view of the low estimates acquire a bargain or two. A Turkish shamshir with its scimitar shape blade so loved by all cartoonists was estimated at £500. The hammer finally fell at £1,400. Prices were high and well above estimates on most pieces and the sale was a resounding success and one which did credit to the collector Evan Perry who was a man with a good eye, able to recognise quality and value almost instinctively. The prices reflect a trend remarked on in last month's column which is a growing interest in Oriental arms and armour. Sotheby's are holding a season of Islamic sales and these feature some arms and armour, the prices will probably confirm this growing demand.

The London Arms Fair was also held late in September and it was a rather subdued event somewhat overcast by the recent firearms legislation. There was a slackening in interest in antique pistols although these were not affected by the new legislation. There seems to be a feeling that

they may not be left alone in the future. There were a number of Continental dealers exhibiting and this is an encouraging trend. The fair reflects the changing market for there was more militaria on offer and a reasonable amount seemed to be changing hands. The feeling after the fair was that the market was rather in the doldrums and life was becoming more difficult for the dealer and the collector. This was the 59th London Fair and the market has changed beyond recognition since the first trial fair was held in the late 1960s. It may be that the time has come for a close look at the trade and similar fairs to see if changes might be needed.

As is usual Wallis and Wallis held a sale following the London Arms Fair with its two sections of the top quality Connoisseur Section and the usual militaria and arms and armour section. The Connoisseur section as always held some very fine pieces and they made their prices. In general this section caters for the high buying collectors who constitute only a small section of the market. Some fine Scottish

broadsword sold at prices of £2,300 to £2,800. A rare silver gorget of the Honorable Artillery Company hall marked for 1787 sold for an impressive £3,200. The general collector may look with envy at some of the fine pieces but the size of their pocket limits them to the more mundane objects within their price range.

The militaria section offered some four hundred lots ranging from medals to badges and uniforms. A leopard skin, politically incorrect today sold for £330. Typical of the Victorian disregard for age a fine silver cup by a famous 18th century London maker and hall marked for 1783 had been embossed in the 1860s with the figures of two volunteers to convert it into a prize shooting cup. It sold for £340. In the arms section was an East India Company Brunswick rifle which went up to £1,000. Now that David Harding's long awaited book on East India Company weapons has been published the interest and demand for these items will certainly increase.

*Frederick Wilkinson*

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